

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name SYLVESTER MANOR
other names/site number SYLVESTER FARM; MR. DERING'S FARM; SYLVESTER MANOR EDUCATIONAL FARM

2. Location

street & number 80 NORTH FERRY ROAD not for publication
city or town SHELTER ISLAND vicinity
state NEW YORK code NY county SUFFOLK code 103 zip code 11964

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
 national statewide local
Ruth O'Purport DSHPO 2/18/15
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting official Date
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
 other (explain: _____)
Alexis Abernathy 4/28/15
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
 (Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
7	4	buildings
8	0	sites
10	4	structures
2	1	objects
27	9	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed
 in the National Register**

N/A

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: camp, single dwelling
 AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural field,
 storage, agricultural outbuilding

DOMESTIC: single dwelling
 AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural field,
 storage, agricultural outbuilding
 RECREATION & CULTURE: museum
 EDUCATION
 COMMERCE/TRADE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

COLONIAL: Georgian
 LATE 19th and 20th CENTURY REVIVALS:
 Colonial Revival

foundation: STONE, CONCRETE
 walls: WOOD: weatherboard, shingle, plywood
 roof: WOOD: shingle; ASPHALT
 other: GLASS, METAL, BRICK

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

Sylvester Manor—a name which reflects the Sylvester family’s longstanding association with this historic Long Island estate, and the manorial status it was granted in 1666 by King Charles II—is a 225-acre historic property located in the Dering Harbor area of Shelter Island, Suffolk County, New York. Contained within the bounds of Sylvester Manor is a collection of significant cultural resources which chronicle portions of nine centuries of human occupation, endeavor and land use there; among the identified archaeological sites are those which portray the property’s history as a provisioning operation for two Caribbean sugar plantations, a use that was initiated in the mid-seventeenth century. The architectural centerpiece of the nominated property is a ca. 1737 Georgian-era house which served as the seat of the Sylvester family and the sprawling estate upon which it was erected. Although this house was modified and aggrandized on multiple occasions after its original date of erection—including during the first decade of the twentieth century to plans developed by the noted architect Henry Bacon—it nevertheless retains interpretable first-period features and is an impressive example of pre-1750 Georgian design on eastern Long Island. Additional contributing resources include a ca. 1810 windmill that was moved to its present location, on the Sylvester Manor grounds, in the 1920s; a two-acre Colonial Revival-style garden, reworked from an earlier eighteenth-century manifestation in 1908, the year in which major renovations were undertaken on the house under Bacon’s guidance; and two early burial grounds, the so-called Quaker cemetery and an African-American and Native American burial ground. As for the identified archaeological resources contained within the nomination boundary, these include those which document Late Woodland Period (ca. 1200-ca.1500) and Contact Period (ca. 1500- 1652) local Native American activities, in addition to those portraying the provisioning plantation aspect of the property’s history, ca. 1652- ca. 1680.

Narrative Description

Location & Setting

The lands which the boundary of Sylvester Manor encompasses are located north of New York Route 114 and Manwaring Road, west of Manhanset Road, south of Cobbetts Lane and east of a water feature known as Gardiners Creek, in the Dering Harbor area of Shelter Island, Suffolk County. The principal access to the property is via Route 114, from which extends, northward, a single entrance road that divides into a loop from which many of the property’s features can be accessed. Contained within the northernmost portion of this loop is the garden, and at its extreme northwestern corner the Sylvester Manor House, in front of which—on its south side—is a smaller circular driveway that extends from the main loop. A short distance to the immediate west and northwest of the house is Gardiners Creek, which communicates with Dering Harbor via a narrow passage beneath Winthrop Road. The windmill is located in an open clearing of approximately four acres, and is situated southeast of the main access road and most of the other resources, a short distance from Manwaring Road.

The following is an itemized inventory of those resources associated with the Sylvester Manor property; these are divided into two sub-categories, contributing and non-contributing resources, with the contributing archaeological sites itemized at the end of the first section. Dates of construction for buildings and structures, where known, are given. Parenthetical references are to commonly used or contemporary names. The position of resources within the larger estate environs are depicted on the site map included with this documentation.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Sylvester Manor House, ca. 1737; ca. 1758; ca. 1840; ca. 1888; ca. 1908; ca. 1944 (contributing building)

The architectural significance and related developmental context for the Sylvester Manor House has been fully articulated by architectural historian Robert Hefner in a 2013 report which should be referred to for

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detailed information relative to the house and its physical evolution.¹ The original Sylvester dwelling, built ca. 1652-53, was replaced ca. 1737 by the earliest portion of the nominated house, which was erected for Brinley Sylvester and subsequently modified at multiple points in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to arrive at its present configuration and appearance. It is a wood frame, shingle-clad building with a southern orientation and consists of a large, two-story main block with a high hipped roof and a rear block, also two stories, that extends from the main block's north elevation; there is additionally a smaller one-story wing abutting the north wall of the rear block. These combine to form a roughly rectangular-shaped footprint. The rear block and wing encompass multiple periods of development, the earliest of which is ca. 1758, at which time a one-story kitchen wing was added to the original main block, this wing being subsequently aggrandized ca. 1859, ca. 1888 and again in 1908, the latter time under the direction of architect Henry Bacon.

The south-facing façade—the principal elevation of the original ca. 1737 Sylvester house— features symmetrical fenestration in a five-bay arrangement with center entrance; in addition to the nine windows corresponding with the first and second stories, there are three gabled dormers that punctuate the roofline and provide natural light for the attic. The main and dormer windows are fitted with six-over-six wood sash; the principal entrance has a six-paneled door flanked by full-height sidelights and topped by an unglazed fan motif. This entrance is shielded beneath a small gable-roofed porch sustained by slender Tuscan columns. The original ca. 1737 door was of a double-leaf type and remains on site. Set back slightly from the ridge of the hipped roof are two massive brick chimney stacks that, in their first-phase manifestation, serviced front and rear-facing fireplaces, an aspect of the original center hall, double-pile Georgian plan. These chimneys have since been rebuilt. The roofline has been modified from its original appearance by the ca. 1875 extension of the eaves, which are bracketed, to create a prominent overhang; the corners of the building have paneled pilasters, a later treatment dating to the 1840s. The roof is wood shingled.

The side elevations of the main block are of similar conception, although variations in the fenestration scheme are evident. The east elevation has two windows and a doorway at first-story level, and two windows at second-story level; the west elevation has two windows and a door at first-story level, and three windows at second story level. A single, centrally placed dormer pierces the roofline on both elevations. The first-story of both side elevations is fronted by porches which, along with the small front porch, date to the 1908 renovations. Like the front porch, the west porch is sustained by Tuscan order columns, while the east porch is carried by square anta-piers; both side porches were once embellished with Chinese Chippendale-inspired railings above cornice level, since removed. A portion of the porch on the west elevation is enclosed. Both the east and west elevations of the rear block feature asymmetrical fenestration.

Like the exterior, the interior of the Manor House reflects multiple periods of physical development. The overall plan of the main block, consisting of broad center stair hall and four rooms at both first and second floor level— these reflecting the bays defined by the house's timber frame—reflects to some extent the original design intent of the ca. 1737 edifice, as do the front and rear-facing fireplaces. However, the main block's rear rooms at first and second story level were subsequently deepened, one of a number of changes that occurred during the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some first-phase finish material does nevertheless remain, in the form of fielded-panel wall treatments with fully articulated pilasters and cornice work, in addition to material that has been retained on site, such as the original double-leaf entrance doors, a beaufat door, the original stair balusters, and paneled wood window shutters.

¹ Robert Hefner, "Sylvester Manor: Brinley Sylvester's c. 1737 House," Historic Structure Report: Architecture Component prepared for Sylvester Manor Education Farm, Inc., March 2013.

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Garden, ca. 1908 (contributing site)

The design and construction of this two-acre Colonial Revival garden is contemporary with the work undertaken on the Manor House under the auspices of architect Henry Bacon and represents the vision of Cornelia Horsford. The garden, while noted in the resource count as a single contributing site, nevertheless includes a number of associated features which are noted below. It incorporates the axial plan laid out in the eighteenth century and retains some early plant material, such as box hedges, thought to be the first introduced into the American colonies; the ca. 1908 plan included the construction of terraced and parterre flower beds and a sunken Dutch flower bed, accessed from a staircase descending from the rose garden. Mature deciduous and coniferous trees are also a component of the garden design.

Features associated with the garden include a nineteenth-century privy at the southeast corner; entrance gates and associated gateposts on the garden's east and west sides; a bench with trellised canopy on the south side; and the concrete steps and associated turned wood railings on the north side.

Additionally, the garden contains a hip-roofed privy (contributing building) which dates to the eighteenth century age; it is located along its north perimeter. This wood frame building has a square plan and is covered on three of its four sides with clapboard; the west elevation retains fish-scale wood shingles held in place with wrought nails. From the roof, which is wood shingled, rises a prominent weather vane. Fenestration consists of a six-paneled door flanked by small windows with six-light sash. Cornices are boxed and moulded. The interior retains wood paneling dating to its original construction, in addition to three adult seats and a child's seat.

Barn Complex, ca. 1850- ca. 1910

This three-building complex consists of the "Long Barn," the "Small Barn," and the "Benjamin Glover Barn" and is located between the east and west segments of the main entrance loop, south of the garden. Presently the complex serves a variety of needs, including work and storage space. The three buildings that comprise the complex are as follows:

"Long Barn," ca. 1910 (contributing building) is a low-slung building of light frame construction built on above a concrete pad and is the southeastern-most of the three buildings that form the manor's barn complex. This building has a rectangular plan and a gable-ended roof, the latter punctuated by a single gable-roofed dormer on the south slope; the exterior is clad with wood shingles and the roof is laid with rolled asphalt. The south-facing elevation is the principal one and includes a series of enclosed bays in addition to a human door which is flanked by windows.

"Benjamin Glover Barn," ca. 1850 & later (contributing building), is a timber-frame building built on a three-bay plan and has two levels of interior space. It is located immediately west of the "Long Barn" and is gable-ended, its roof ridge straddled by a deteriorated wood cupola. The majority of the exterior is currently covered with painted plywood panels, though wood shingles remain in the gable field on the east elevation; the plywood panels and exterior wood bracing, which rests on concrete pads, date to 1990. Large openings are present, at first and second-story level, on the north elevation; the two doors corresponding with the lower bay are hung on cast-iron strap hinges. Other fenestration includes small square-shaped windows and doors. A small shed abuts a portion of the west elevation.

The interior has, at first-story level, stalls on the east side of the plan and stanchions on the opposite west side; these appear contemporary with one another. The building has four bents and 14 birds-mouthed rafter pairs with corresponding purlin plates; the transverse beams

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between the posts supporting the purlins were cut out subsequent to the barn's construction to accommodate a hay track. The larger framing members are hewn hemlock while the braces are sawn hemlock. The anchor beams of the two internal bents have wedged dovetail connections where they meet the posts. Some of the studding to which shingle lathing was affixed in the west gable shows clear evidence of having been reused from an earlier application. Sawn common joists sustain the upper floor, which is accessed by way of a box stair located in the northwest corner. This barn at one time housed heritage dairy cattle and currently serves as a storage area for, among other things, historic agricultural equipment.

"Small Barn," ca. 1910 (contributing building), is the northernmost of the three-building barn complex. It is a self-contained gable-front building, one-and-one-half stories in height, and of light frame construction; it was banked into the site so as to allow the basement to be accessible at grade on the south elevation, and was built above a foundation of brick which has been parged with cement. The exterior is sheathed with wood shingles and the roof is covered with rolled asphalt. Fenestration on the south elevation consists of three windows with six-over-six sash and a central double-leaf door, the latter accessible by way of wood stairs, in addition to five small doors which punctuate the raised foundation. Three doors, one at half-story level, are present on the north elevation, the central one being of a double-leaf type.

Concrete trough and foundation (contributing structures)

These two features are located immediately south of the main barn complex.

Peacock Coop, ca. 1890 (contributing structure)

This animal shelter is a small light-frame structure with rectangular plan and hipped roof with deeply projecting eaves; it is located to the west of the barn complex. Both the roof and walls are covered with wood shingles. The ridges of the hipped roof are flared where they extend beyond the wall plane.

Windmill site, well and cistern, ca. 1880s (contributing structures)

These resources—four concrete pads with steel footings, a brick-lined well and a brick cistern—are situated north of the barn complex and south of the garden. The windmill has been removed; the cistern corresponds with a raised mound of earth.

Small shed with leanto, pre-1800 & later (contributing building)

This building presents as a small, gable-roofed outbuilding with a lean-to on the north elevation. It is a timber frame building of scribe-rule construction, the frame consisting of two bents with gunstock posts and English tying joints. The exterior is shingle clad, as is the roof. Access to the interior of the main section, which is lime-washed, is via paired doors on the west gable end, which are hung on cast-iron strap hinges (the ghosts of earlier strap hinges remain visible). The lean-to appears to be a rebuild; evidence, in the form of an empty mortise on the north facet of the northwest post, suggests it existed previously. It is believed the building may have functioned at an early point of its history as a small carriage shed.

E.N. Horsford Chemistry Studio/ "Furnace House" or "Horsford Cottage," ca. 1840 & later (contributing building)

This small T-shaped frame building is located a short distance north of the house. It consists of two gabled units, the larger one being oriented with its roof ridge on a north to south axis, the second one engaging the former on its east elevation, the two roof ridges being perpendicular to one another. The exterior frame and roof are covered with wood shingles. Doors are located on the south elevations of both sections and are hung from cast-iron strap hinges; there is a single window with six-over-six sash on the east elevation of the

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small ell and on the west elevation of the main section. The interior of this smaller section has a coved plaster ceiling and Greek Revival-style trim around the window.

Story-and-a-half house, ca. 1850 (contributing building)

This building is located southeast of the barn complex, east of the eastern portion of the entrance loop. It consists of a one-and-one-half story gable ended main block, built on a rectangular plan, from which extends a rear ell with partial lean-to, these two units combining to form a roughly T-shaped footprint. The main block was oriented so as to face southwards, the principal elevation being five-bays in width with a central entrance. The exterior is wood shingled and the roof is laid with rolled asphalt. Fenestration on the south-facing façade consists of four windows with six-over-six sash and a door at first-story level, above which are five windows—four large and one small—corresponding with a wall dormer. A pent-roofed “stoop” with benches corresponds with the principal entrance, which is flanked by narrow full-height sidelights. An exterior brick chimney is present on the west gable elevation of the main block.

“Shelter Island Windmill,” ca. 1810; moved to present site 1926 (previously NRHP-listed as part of *Long Island Wind and Tide Mills Thematic Resources MPDF*)

The windmill is located within the northern portion of the so-called “Windmill Field,” where the manor’s market garden and farm stand are located. Originally constructed on the North Fork, it was moved by barge and ox-team to Shelter Island in the nineteenth century and to its current position in the 1920s. It was built on an octagonal plan and is shingle clad. It presently lacks sails but it otherwise intact.

African American and Native American Cemetery, ca. 1651 & later (contributing site)

The African American and Native American Cemetery, known otherwise as the “Burying Ground of the Colored People of the Manor since 1651”—the descriptor which was carved into a boulder adjacent to it, at the time the site was commemorated, in 1884, by the Horsford family—is located in the saddle between the east and west portions of the main access road, north of where the two sections deviate from one another. The site occupies a hilly location which is interspersed with towering pine trees. Although the graves are not marked, work undertaken in June 2014 under the guidance of Katherine Hayes should provide a more definitive account of how many burials may be present. It is believed as many as 200 African-Americans and Native Americans are interred in this burial yard. The wood perimeter fence is a non-contributing structure.

Quaker Cemetery, ca. 1700 & later (contributing site)

The Quaker cemetery is accessed from Route 114, west of the main gates to the manor. The perimeter of the fence is marked by a wood fence (non-contributing structure) which defines a roughly rectangular area. A scattering of head stones are present, some of which are of early eighteenth century age and display “death’s head” iconography. The central feature of the cemetery is the Quaker Cemetery Monument, a commemorative tablet placed dedicated on July 4, 1884; it consists of a three-tiered cut sandstone base and four paneled and fluted cut sandstone piers, which sustain the carved marble tablet. A few mature, deciduous trees rise from within the perimeter of the fence inside the cemetery. The adjacent “Creek Cottage” was built ca. 1743, using some framing components from the ca. 1652-53 Sylvester dwelling, to house a minister; it has been substantially altered in more recent times and is located outside of the nomination boundary.

The entrance to the cemetery from the road is marked by a pair of cast-stone gateposts and associated metal pipe railing (contributing structure); the posts have moulded cornices and are terminated by globe-form newel caps. Pintels indicate the positions of gates, since removed. “SYLVESTER MANOR” is inscribed, in low-relief lettering, on the south face of the west pier. A blue-and-gold historic marker dating to 1975 (non-contributing object) is located near to the entrance.

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Manor Gates/Entrance, ca. 1915 (contributing structure)

This formal entrance is situated at the southern side of the property, where vehicular access from Route 114 is located. Constructed of concrete, the entranceway is predicated on two sections of curving wall, each of which is terminated by piers, in addition to a second, lower section of curving wall that defines a raised planting bed. The two interior piers, from which wood gates are hung, are terminated by moulded cornices and globe-form newel caps, and further embellished with decorative consoles marks. "SYLVESTER MANOR" is painted on the westernmost of the two interior piers, in small letters immediately below cornice level.

Land bridge, ca. 1909 (contributing structure)

The land bridge, or berm, was reconstructed ca. 1909 on the site of a former tide-powered saw mill on Gardiner's Creek that was established in the seventeenth century.

Gateposts and gate (contributing structure)

These two wood posts mark the beginning of the land bridge that extends to the north of the house. They are square in plan and terminated by a cornice and newel cap, and from the easternmost of the two is hung a wood gate.

Gateposts and fencing (contributing structure)

This feature is situated a short distance from the African American and Native American cemetery; it consists of two wood piers with moulded cornices, from which are hung wood gates and from which extend sections of wood railing.

Copper Beech Tree (contributing object)

This Copper Beech tree was a gift of the noted botanist Asa Gray; it is located on the back lawn, to the west of the main house.

Cannon (contributing object)

This canon was unearthed by landscapers in the 1950s; it has been identified as a seventeenth century English naval cannon. While its discovery post-dates the cited period of significance, it nevertheless shares a long association with the estate property; by one traditional account it was secreted away during the 1670s so as to conceal it from Dutch soldiers during the third Anglo-Dutch War (1672-74).

Archaeological Resources

The following list itemizes the identified archaeological sites contained within the nomination boundary. Detailed informative relative to each of these sites can be found in Katherine H. Hayes, "Field Excavations at Sylvester Manor," article 5 of "The Historical Archaeology of Sylvester Manor" in *Northeast Historical Archaeology*, vol. 36, Issue 1.

West & Southwest Lawn Excavations (contributing site)

Extensive geophysical testing, followed by limited excavations, showed the subsurface remains of a heavily engineered waterfront working area. Linear anomalies on two primary orientations derive from both buildings (possibly warehouses) and ground surface modification (terracing, shoreline filling, and cobble paving). Material culture provided few date-diagnostic items but the landscape is thought to have been part of the early plantation operation.

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North Lawn Excavation (contributing site)

Excavations in this area revealed the remains of a nineteenth-century dairy with a brick floor and deep deposits of fill likely displaced by the manor house's north end additions. Beneath these fills a small number of postholes with seventeenth-century ceramics index the northern extent of the plantation infrastructure.

The Melon Patch Excavation (contributing site)

A small concentration of pre-Contact ceramic and lithic debris indicates a Manhasset presence, though without intact features. Nineteenth-century farming was also indicated by a single fence post-hole and a scatter of refined earthenware pottery sherds.

The North Peninsula Excavation (contributing site)

A multicomponent site area, the North Peninsula includes Late Woodland-period (1000 CE to Contact) ceramics and lithics, as well as shell middens with AMS dates of 1200-1300 CE. On the south-southwest slope a broad scatter of seventeenth and eighteenth-century ceramic sherds were also recovered in association with planting features and possible plow-scars. Anecdotally the area was thought to have been the location of the so-called "Negro Gardens."

South and Southeast Lawn Excavation (contributing site)

Directly adjacent to the standing 1737 house and extending into the Formal Garden are the core early plantation (1650-1680) remains. These include numerous postholes and slot trenches; a robbed structural trench for a post-in-ground building; a diamond-patterned cobble paved area; a large, layered waste pit which includes livestock slaughter remains, construction/destruction debris, and domestic refuse; and an extensive midden layer dating through the period of construction of the 1737 house.

NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Caretaker's Cottage, ca. 1850 and later (non-contributing building)

The caretaker's cottage, while it incorporates within its physical fabric a mid-nineteenth century dwelling, nevertheless now largely reflects modern conditions. It is a frame building with vinyl siding, asphalt roofing, and vinyl windows, located a short distance to the east of the ca. 1850s house.

Tennis Court, ca. 1970 (non-contributing structure)

Greenhouse (non-contributing building)

A metal-framed building, located immediately south of the tennis court and northeast of the barn complex.

Sylvester Manor Farmstand, 2011-13 (non-contributing building)

This timber-frame building was erected from lightning-damaged pine harvested from the land; it is located near the property's southeastern boundary and is accessed from Manwaring Road. It is used as a market for the various vegetables cultivated in the adjacent "Windmill Field."

"Engine Barn"/Garage ca. 1980 (contributing building)

A one-story, gable-ended building of platform construction built on a rectangular plan with concrete pad; the rear wall is lower than the front wall and as such the gable ends have a salt-box profile. The principal south-facing elevation is fitted with four sliding doors, each of which has two sets of fixed six-light sash above diagonal panels formed of bead-board. Siding consists of vertical boards and the roof is covered with rolled asphalt.

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Garden Shed (non-contributing structure)

This shed is located on the west perimeter of the “Windmill Field,” along the tree-line.

Shelter adjacent to Quaker Cemetery (non-contributing structure)

This is an open structure with a hipped roof sustained on four wood poles; the sides can be lowered and raised as needed.

Frame shelter (non-contributing structure)

This feature is located west of the house and is of bolted wood-frame construction.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHAEOLOGY

ARCHITECTURE

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCE

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

ca. 1200- ca. 1944

Significant Dates

ca. 1200-1500; ca. 1737; ca. 1758; ca. 1835; 1908; ca. 1926;
ca. 1944

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Bacon, Henry; architect, 1908 house addition/alterations

Dominy, Nathaniel; carpenter/wright, ca. 1810 windmill

Greenleaf, James; architect, entrance gates

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance, ca. 1200- ca. 1944, is initiated with the property's earliest identified archaeological site and terminates at 1944, the end of the Cornelia Horsford ownership period, during which time the last significant modifications to the house and property were undertaken.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

Synopsis

Sylvester Manor is a nationally significant historic resource located on Shelter Island, Suffolk County, New York. The nominated property contains within its bounds any number of significant cultural resources which depict centuries of human occupation and activity there, both prior to and after the commencement of European American settlement. The architectural centerpiece of the property is the Sylvester Manor House, the earliest section of which dates to the 1730s; built for Brinley Sylvester (1694-1752), it offered itself as a sophisticated expression of Georgian-era domestic design and, while modernized and aggrandized on multiple occasions since, nevertheless retains features of its original early-eighteenth-century construction date. It was, by all indications, the first example of fully developed Georgian house erected on eastern Long Island and relates to contemporary architectural developments in Newport, Rhode Island, where the Sylvester family maintained social and economic ties.² However, it was not the first dwelling that the Sylvesters resided in on the property, as they had established themselves there by the early 1650s. Brinley Sylvester was a grandson of Nathaniel Sylvester (1610-1680), who is credited as Shelter Island's first European American settler. In 1651 Sylvester, an Anglo Dutch sugar merchant, and his brother, Constant, in association with two partners, purchased the rights to 8,000-acre Shelter Island and thereafter established a provisioning operation for two Barbados sugar plantations. This provisioning enterprise, which relied in some measure on African American slave and local Native American labor, centered on the local stands of white oak from which barrel staves could be fashioned, a critical resource for the shipment of West Indies sugar, molasses, rum and tobacco to England. Other provisions necessary for sustaining a Caribbean plantation were also sourced there, namely foodstuffs. Among the resources included in this nomination is a burial ground that contains the remains of many the estate's slaves, their descendants, Native Americans, and others who worked the Sylvester family's lands at an early date. The nominated property, consisting of 225 acres, is what remains of the core of this early provisioning plantation and what later emerged, beginning in the first half of the eighteenth century, as a fully developed estate replete with a sophisticated manor house and designed landscape components. Extensive archaeological explorations of the site, the bulk of which occurred between 1998 and 2005 and which were undertaken by the Fiske Center for Archaeological Research, University of Massachusetts, have provided a wealth of information relative to the early history and use of this site. This work has yielded compelling material culture which portrays the early interaction between European Americans and Native Americans who, in concert with enslaved African Americans, conducted provisioning and other activities there following Nathaniel Sylvester's settlement of Shelter Island.

At the time of Nathaniel Sylvester's death in 1680, his Shelter Island holdings—which by 1674 included the entire 8,000-acre extent of the island—passed to his five male heirs, two of whom, Giles and Nathaniel II, assumed control. By the 1730s two substantial tracts, consisting of approximately 2,000 and 1,000 acres apiece, had been sold out of the Sylvester family. Following Brinley Sylvester's death in 1752, the remaining estate property was for a time leased to the Fanning family, but in 1762 Sylvester's daughter, Mary, and her husband, Thomas Dering, took up residence there. Their son, Sylvester Dering, inherited the property in 1785 and remained until his death in 1820, at which time it was purchased by Samuel Smith Gardiner, another descendant of the Sylvester family, whose residency corresponds with modifications made to the house. The next era in the property's history, 1859-1900, corresponds with the occupancy of Eben N. Horsford (1818-1893), a scientist and Harvard professor whose principal residence was in Cambridge, Massachusetts; the small building to the north of the main house was used as a laboratory by Horsford, who had married into the Gardiner family, during his summer visits to the property. The last major period of

² Hefner, "Sylvester Manor."

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development, that spanning the occupancy of Cornelia Horsford, 1900-1944, corresponds with an expansion and remodeling of the house undertaken under the auspices of noted American architect Henry Bacon, and which additionally included the reconfiguration of the garden into its present Colonial Revival configuration.

Sylvester Manor's historic architectural, archaeological and landscape features offer a remarkable view of the layered history of this site and the early history of eastern Long Island immediately before and following its settlement by European Americans. National significance is being claimed on the merit of the archaeological investigations conducted there to date, which have provided a wealth of interpretable data relative to the property's early history, ca. 1652- ca. 1680, as a provisioning operation for two distant West Indies sugar plantations. The bulk of the cultural material recovered there relates to these provisioning activities, in addition to construction and demolition material and that which speaks to household production and consumption, and suggests that Native Americans, enslaved African Americans, and European Americans—three distinct ethnic groups with their own cultural perspectives, values and outlooks—lived and worked in close communication with one another. This information significantly informs our understanding of the American Colonial experience, the complexities of cultural interaction during that time, and the manner in which these relationships and markedly different cultural perspectives affected material culture. The history of the property as an estate, or manor, embodied by the construction of a substantial Georgian pile for Brinley Sylvester ca. 1737, while remarkable in and of itself, nevertheless followed this earlier period of development and land use. Manorial status was granted to the property in 1666 by King Charles II.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Significance Statement Overview

The significance statement has been structured in the following fashion. The first section provides an overview of the early history and settlement of Shelter Island, which is interwoven with the arrival of the Sylvester family there in the mid-seventeenth century. That is followed by a brief synopsis of the ownership of the property between 1651 and 1944, the second date representing the end of the cited period of significance. The associated context for the estate's architectural and designed landscape features, central of which are the ca. 1737 Sylvester Manor House and the ca. 1908 formal garden, is next, followed by a section devoted to the archaeology of the property, where detailed information relative to the ca. 1652- ca. 1680 period, during which time the property was functioning in large measure as a provisioning operation for two Barbados plantations, is provided, followed by associated research questions. The conclusion section outlines the case for national significance, which is made on the merit of the extensive archaeology undertaken there to date. This statement of significance relies heavily on scholarship provided to date by a number of individuals, among them Katherine Hayes, Robert Hefner, Stephen Mrozowski, Jack Gary, Anne Hancock and Katherine Priddy.

Historical Context: The Early History of Shelter Island

The earliest history of Shelter Island, from the time of European American settlement, is closely intertwined with the presence of the Sylvester family, the first non-indigenous people identified as having taken up permanent residence there. The Manhanset tribe had long since established itself on Shelter Island, which was central to their domain, and which additionally included Ram Island and possibly Hog Island. Native Americans knew Shelter Island, which is positioned between Long Island's North and South forks, as *Manhansack-Abaquatwamock*, or "an island sheltered by islands."³ Yokee—referred to variously as Youghco

³ Benjamin F. Thompson, *History of Long Island* (New York: E. French, 1839), 68; 233.

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or Poggaticut—the Sachem of the Manhansets and Grand Sachem of the East End Algonkian network, was a significant figure in the Pequot Wars who exerted his influence over the other four Native American communities on the East End; Lion Gardiner’s memoir of the Pequot Wars refer to him numerous times.

In June 1651, Stephen Goodyear of New Haven, Connecticut, conveyed to Nathaniel Sylvester, Constant Sylvester, Thomas Middleton and Thomas Rouse, title to Shelter Island, for which Goodyear received “sixteen hundred weight of good merchantable Muscovado sugar.” The Manhansets subsequently sued the partners through an interpreter in an English court in New Haven and prevailed, forcing them to repurchase the island directly from the tribe. Confirmation to their title was granted by Yokee and the Manhansets in 1653. Rouse conveyed his rights to one-quarter of the island to John Booth, from whom Nathaniel Sylvester acquired them in 1656, after which time he transferred a portion to his brother, Constant. In 1666 the 1651 land grant, issued during New York’s Dutch Colonial period, was confirmed by the English Crown, which had assumed control of the Province of New York two years prior. Following the brief recapture of New York by the Dutch in 1673, the Shelter Island interests of Middleton and Constant Sylvester, who were noted as public enemies, were seized and sold, to Nathaniel Sylvester, for 500 pounds, at which time he became the sole owner of Shelter Island. Payment for this conveyance was made to representatives of the Dutch, who sent an armed contingent to Shelter Island to collect their debt from Sylvester prior to their removal from New York.⁴

Nathaniel Sylvester, of English ancestry, was born in Amsterdam, Holland and subsequently removed to Barbados, where he established himself as a planter and merchant. He came to America in 1640 and, following his co-purchase of Shelter Island, settled there ca. 1652. Sylvester’s wife, Grizzell, was a daughter of Thomas Brinley, Auditor General of King Charles I and II.⁵

At the time of Nathaniel Sylvester’s death in 1680, his five sons—Giles, Nathaniel II, Constant, Peter and Benjamin—received equal shares of Shelter Island. Nathaniel II sold his interests to the Havens family and subsequently settled in Rhode Island; Peter and Benjamin, meanwhile, conveyed their interests to Giles, who had inherited his father’s homestead, from which they passed to his executor, William Nicholls of Islip.⁶ Brinley Sylvester, son of Nathaniel II, came to Shelter Island from Newport, Rhode Island, in 1719, having acquired title to the land that includes present-day Sylvester Manor through purchase and inheritance. Following a protracted legal dispute with the Nicholls family, Brinley Sylvester was awarded the family’s original dwelling and 1,000 acres of land, which he shortly thereafter began reshaping with the construction of a new high-style dwelling.⁷

Shelter Island was established as a town in 1730, at which time its 8,000 acres were held by 20 property owners; these included members of the Sylvester, Nicholls, Havens, Hudson, Payne, Bowditch, Parker, Vail, Conkling, Gilman, Tuthill, L’Hommedieu, Hopkins and Brown families. In 1733 the first permanent church, of the Presbyterian denomination, was established.⁸ Previously Quakers had sought refuge on Shelter Island, under the hospitality of the Sylvester family, from persecution in the Massachusetts Bay Colony by the Puritans. George Fox, founder of the Society of Quakers, was a friend of the family and was, by one later nineteenth century account, “a frequent visitor” to Shelter Island.⁹ By Fox’s own account, as captured in his 1672 journal, he preached three times at the Sylvester’s home, including from “Madame

⁴ Ibid, 233-34.

⁵ “The Memory of Nathaniel Sylvester Fittingly Remembered,” *Friends Intelligencer*, vol. XLI, no. 28 (23 August 1884), 436.

⁶ Thompson, *Long Island*, 235.

⁷ Mac Griswold, *The Manor* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2013), “Sylvester Manor Time Line.”

⁸ Thompson, *Long Island*, 236-37.

⁹ “Fittingly Remembered,” *Intelligencer*, 436. Records indicate that Fox visited the Sylvesters on at least two occasions.

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Sylvester's dooryard." The connection between the Sylvesters and Quaker religion is an interesting one, given the sect's rejection of slavery in the eighteenth century.

The historian Benjamin Thompson, writing in the 1830s, indicated that during the Revolution the British made frequent incursions onto Shelter Island, which was "stripped of its wood for the use of the British army and navy; and great injury was committed upon the property of the inhabitants."¹⁰ During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries agriculture remained a prevalent occupation among the residents of Shelter Island, who raised cereal grains and reared sheep, among other agrarian pursuits. At the time of the 1850 Federal census, Samuel S. Gardiner, then the owner of Sylvester Manor, identified himself as a farmer, as did many of his neighbors.

Ownership Chronology, 1651-1944

The first owner of the property which came to be Sylvester Manor was Nathaniel Sylvester, who in 1651 acquired title to Shelter Island with his brother, Constant, and partners Thomas Middleton and Thomas Rouse. The family resided in a ca. 1652 dwelling that continued to be used until the erection of the new dwelling built for Nathaniel Sylvester's grandson, Brinley, ca. 1737. At the time of Nathaniel Sylvester's death in 1680, his land holdings, by that time encompassing all of Shelter Island, were conveyed equally to his five sons. By the 1730s two large tracts of the Sylvester family's holdings, consisting of a total approximately 3,000 acres, had been sold off. Brinley Sylvester, who received clear title to Nathaniel Sylvester's estate in 1735 following legal proceedings, maintained ownership until his death in 1752, after which time the estate was leased to the Fanning family by David Chesebrough, the executor of Brinley Sylvester's estate.¹¹

In 1762 Brinley Sylvester's daughter, Mary, and her husband, Thomas Dering, took up residence at Sylvester Manor. Their son, Sylvester Dering, inherited the property in 1785 and remained until his death in 1820, at which time it was purchased by Samuel Smith Gardiner, also a Sylvester descendant. Dering's widow, Esther Sarah Dering, was granted lifetime residency following her husband's death and resided for several years in the east portion of the house until electing to leave and live with her son until her own death in 1839. Esther Dering and Samuel Gardiner were thus co-occupants in the period 1828-1839; Gardiner died in 1859.

Between 1859 and 1900 Sylvester Manor was owned by Eben N. Horsford (1818-1893), a scientist and Harvard professor, and his heirs. Horsford, whose principal house was in Cambridge, Massachusetts, had married into the Gardiner family; the Horsford family used the manor on a seasonal basis. The last major period of development, that which corresponds with the occupancy of Cornelia Horsford, spans the years 1900 to 1944, and included the final major improvements rendered to the house and its accompanying landscape.

Architectural & Landscape Design Context

Sylvester Manor's architecture is highlighted by the Sylvester Manor House, the core of which was erected for Brinley Sylvester in the 1730s. It was, at the time of its completion, an unrivaled example of Georgian-era domestic design on eastern Long Island, and was, as noted by architectural historian Robert Hefner, inspired by the contemporary high-style architecture of Newport, Rhode Island.¹² The ca. 1737 house

¹⁰Ibid, 237.

¹¹This ownership chronology has been synthesized from multiple sources, among them Hefner's "Sylvester Manor" and materials maintained by the Sylvester Manor Educational Farm, the present owner.

¹²Hefner, "Sylvester Manor," 3-7.

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replaced an earlier dwelling of more modest and less pretentious characteristics; as a fully developed expression of contemporary Georgian design principles, the new house was commensurate with the Sylvester family's elite social and economic standing and offered ample evidence of their familiarity with contemporary high-style domestic design and exposure to the architecture of Newport's merchant class. The major historic-period modifications post-dating the original building campaign were those rendered in the 1840s and ca. 1908. The 1840s work included an overlay of Greek Revival-style features inside and out; the latter work, executed to plans developed by architect Henry Bacon, included the expansion of the house's existing envelope and additionally reversed some of the earlier Greek Revival work in favor of treatments of a Colonial Revival nature.

A conjectural reconstruction drawing of the original ca. 1737 façade, based on existing physical evidence and documentation, provides some sense of the principal elevation during Brinley Sylvester's time, and before the series of alterations undertaken in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹³ The house's five-bay façade—marked by generous window openings and a fully developed Neoclassical frontispiece which framed double-leaf entrance doors—and its steep hipped roof distinguished it from the contemporary architecture of eastern Suffolk County, characterized by traditional housing forms of more mundane conception such as half and full one-story Capes and two-story center chimney houses. The rigid symmetry of the façade composition intimates the interior plan, which was predicated on a center hall, double-pile spatial arrangement with front and rear rooms serviced by forward and rear-facing fireplaces. Interior finish work, typified by paneled wall surfaces with fully articulated pilasters and cornices, along with the original closed-stringer staircase—components of which were found in the attic, along with other original material supplanted during subsequent renovations—represented the work of skilled joiners and wood turners and the high level of sophistication brought to bear on the house's principal spaces.

The development and physical evolution of the house has been thoroughly addressed by Robert Hefner, and as such only an overview follows. The first significant recorded change to the dwelling, rendered ca. 1755 and during the tenancy of Thomas and Phineas Fanning, was the addition of a single-story kitchen wing, which was added to the main block's north elevation and set flush with its west elevation. Prior to this date the building had been, by all indications, self-contained. Subsequently the kitchen that had originally occupied the northwest portion of the first floor plan was reworked into a dining room, ca. 1785-1827, during the residency of Sylvester Dering and, following his death, that of his widow, Esther Sarah Dering. An 1828 sketch plan, which shows the house divided for the co-occupancy of Esther Dering—as per her dower rights—and new owner Samuel Gardiner, shows the kitchen wing and the projection of what had been the main block's original kitchen into it, beyond the plane of the original rear wall. This map also indicates a series of structures to the north of the house—among them a dairy, a winch-house, and a hog-pen—and the location of the garden with the privy in it, demonstrating something of the surrounding landscape at that time. Dering was granted occupancy of the east side of the house, which she maintained for several years before leaving to reside with her son in Sag Harbor, while Gardiner took possession of the west half, inclusive of the wing.¹⁴

A significant aesthetic remodeling was undertaken on the exterior of the manor house in the 1840s, during the Gardiner ownership period (1827-1859), in the prevailing Greek Revival taste; it was also during this era that the one-story wing was raised to a full two stories, and efforts were undertaken to mute the original, and by this time antiquated, Georgian finishes in the principal spaces with wood and plaster finish more characteristic of that period. Other changes included the rebuilding of the east chimney, at which time the

¹³Ibid, illustration 9; see Appendix "Historic Images."

¹⁴Ibid, 32; illustration 26.

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rear facing fireplaces were replaced with stoves. The exterior updating was highlighted by the introduction, on the façade, of a full-width Doric order porch with paneled parapet, corner pilasters on the main block, and the introduction of a trabeated frontispiece more in keeping with Greek Revival-style design mandates. The effectiveness of this reworking was somewhat compromised by the original relationship of the upper windows to the cornice, as it failed to afford space for the insertion of a frieze. It was also at this time that the original twelve-over-twelve window sash was replaced with six-over-six sash.¹⁵

The extension of the house's eaves, as first depicted in photography from ca. 1880, occurred during the tenancy of Eben Horsford and his heirs, as did the reworking of the staircase. During the Horsford era the west parlor was transformed into the so-called "Landscape Parlor," distinguished by its scenic wall paper—"The El Dorado" by Jean Zuber et Compagnie—which, as noted by Hefner, may have been purchased by the family while in Europe in 1888. It was also in this period that the southwest bed chamber was imparted with a Colonial Revival flavor with the addition of woodwork from a house in Cambridge, Massachusetts, that in 1775 served as the American headquarters in advance of the Battle of Bunker Hill and where Oliver Wendell Holmes was born; a brass plaque, affixed to the chimney breast, offers this information and is dated 1884. A story in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* noted that "Professor Horsford, of Boston, owner of the old Sylvester manor, has had erected in the ancient residence a mantelpiece that was once the property of General Warren, of Revolutionary fame."¹⁶ Other changes in this period included the installation of indoor plumbing, an updated kitchen, and improved accommodations for servants.¹⁷

During the period corresponding with the ownership of Cornelia Horsford (1900-1944), the last significant alterations were made to the house, in addition to modifications to the principal landscape component of Sylvester Manor, the garden. Foremost of these was the reworking of the house under the auspices of New York City architect Henry Bacon (1866-1924). A native of Illinois, Bacon worked early in his career as a draftsman in the office of McKim, Mead & White, before leaving to establish his own practice in the late 1890s. Bacon is remembered today as the architect of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., in collaboration with the sculptor Daniel Chester French, and he additionally worked with sculptor Augustus St. Gaudens. An avowed classicist who had studied the monuments of Greek and Roman antiquity in Europe, Bacon did not have an extensive resume of domestic design but nevertheless secured the commission for the work, perhaps, as noted by Hefner, on account of shared connections at Wellesley College.¹⁸ The work called for included the extension of the north wing across the full width of the original main block, which could accommodate a new music room, a larger library, servants quarters and, on the second story, new bed chambers and bathrooms. Correspondence from Bacon's office, addressed to William Gorham at the Chequit Inn on Shelter Island, indicate that work was underway by the summer of 1908.¹⁹

Among the early buildings and structures of Sylvester Manor are two which are of apparent eighteenth-century age. The first of these, the hip-roofed privy in the garden, retains early fish-scale shingles on one elevation and has paneling on the interior which was removed from the main house during a nineteenth-century remodeling. Also of note is the shed with lean-to located east of the house and north of the garden. It has a scribe-ruled timber frame which employs English tying joints; it is a remarkable small-scale example

¹⁵Ibid, 33-35.

¹⁶"Long Island Personal Notes," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 6 December 1884.

¹⁷Hefner, "Sylvester Manor", 37-38.

¹⁸Ibid, 38-39.

¹⁹Ibid

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of traditional English carpentry methods and a survivor from an early era in the property's history. The lime-washed interior surfaces indicate its likely function, at some point, for food storage.

The tenancy of the Horsford family, which used the property in large measure as a summer residence, is in part represented by the small laboratory, referred to variously as the "Furnace House" or "Horsford Cottage," used by Eben Norton Horsford as a chemistry studio. While the precise date of construction has not been determined, elements of the building suggest it was built or otherwise modified in the 1840s, and as such was re-tasked for this purpose following the family's acquisition of the property.

The property's agricultural endeavors are in part represented by the Barn Complex. The earliest barn of the three is the so-called "Benjamin Glover barn," which dates to the mid-nineteenth century. It is of a three-bay type with three evenly spaced bays forming the interior plan, which has two levels. It has a traditional timber frame comprised of four transverse bents and a common rafter roof frame with corresponding purlin posts. Most of the framing components, both hewn and sawn, were fashioned from hemlock. The building was erected, by all indications, to house dairy cattle and store hay; the addition of a hay track sometime after its construction facilitated the latter and required alterations to the framing. Samuel Smith Gardiner, as noted previously, indicated his occupation as "farmer" at the time of the 1850 Federal census. The farm's output is recorded in census data from that year. The property at that time included 250 acres of improved land and was valued at \$15,000, the most of any of Shelter Island's 34 recorded farms. Gardiner maintained nine dairy or "milch" cows, second only to the 11 maintained by Samuel B. Nichol, in addition to 65 head of sheep, nine pigs, four horses and six oxen. Gardiner's arable land was devoted to wheat, rye, Indian corn, and oats.²⁰ The two other buildings which form the three-building complex are of more recent age and document the continuing agricultural endeavors undertaken on the property; they relate to the Horsford ownership period.

The windmill, while not an original feature of the property, is nevertheless a significant Suffolk County historic engineering resource. This mill was erected in Southold ca. 1810 by Nathaniel Dominy, an East Hampton carpenter and millwright, and although moved from its original location to Shelter Island is nevertheless the only surviving windmill from Long Island's North Fork. Dominy's original invoice indicates the mill required 186 days of labor to erect and put into operation. It was transported by barge to Shelter Island in 1840 to replace an older mill that had been destroyed by fire and was operated by local miller Joseph Congdon until about 1855, after which time it fell into disuse. In 1879 it was purchased by Lillian Horsford, whose desire it was to see it preserved and appreciated. The mill remained where it had been moved for several decades and was briefly pressed into service to grind meal and flour during the First World War. Cornelia Horsford had the windmill moved to the Sylvester Manor property and its current location in 1926.

The ca. 1908 Garden represents a substantial reworking of an earlier garden and was executed under the direct guidance and planning of Cornelia Horsford. This redesign, along with the modifications made to the house under the direction of architect Henry Bacon, represent the last of the property's major historic-period alterations. The garden is of Colonial Revival conception, a designed landscape type popularized at the turn of the twentieth century by practitioners such as Arthur Shurcliff, Ralph Griswold and Alden Hopkins. Characteristic elements of this design mode, which was meant to invoke—if only loosely—Colonial models at a time of great sentimentality for the American past, included the use of well-ordered, geometric plans; features such as parterres, carefully laid walkways, raised flower beds, and allees; "old

²⁰1850 Federal population census and Schedule 4: Productions in Agriculture in the Town of Shelter Island, 23 September 1850.

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fashioned” plant material such as boxwood, privet and lilac; and wayside features such as trellises, arbors and pergolas.

Cornelia Horsford’s new design incorporated some of the estate’s existing boxwood, which was brought to Shelter Island from England by Grizzell Sylvester in the 1650s, and as such is believed to be the earliest boxwood planted in America if not the Western Hemisphere. New parterre and terraced flower beds were created, as well as a sunken Dutch flower bed, perhaps in homage to the Sylvester family’s connections to Holland, which was accessed via a staircase that descended from the rose garden. This new incarnation supplanted the remnants of the estate’s earlier axial plan garden.

While the following 1907 account appears to predate the redesign, it nevertheless indicates the importance of the Sylvester Manor garden for social events hosted by the Horsfords:

A brilliant society event of the week was the garden party given by Miss Cornelia Horsford, assisted by her sister, Miss Kate Horsford, at their beautiful country estate, Sylvester Manor. The guests thoroughly enjoyed strolling about the beautiful gardens, where an orchestra of stringed musicians hidden in the shrubbery played sweet music.²¹

Pre-modification conditions are noted in a 1900 news item, which described Sylvester Manor’s gardens as “a prominent feature.”

A narrow walk, bounded by a boxwood hedge over sixty years old... leads to the upper and lower rose gardens. There the flower beds are arranged in quaint, but artistic style, while choice blossoms of various varieties lend their fragrance to the pleasant surroundings. Among the choicest rosebushes in the garden is the Crimson Rambler, on which was one stalk this spring holding ninety buds. There is another garden with a playing fountain in the center, in which disport Japanese gold and silver fish, and choice lilies and Egyptian lotus grow.²²

Archaeological Context: Native American Occupation & Nathaniel Sylvester’s Provisioning Plantation

The early history of the Sylvester Manor property, immediately prior to and following the Sylvester family’s occupation, is best represented by the intensive archaeological investigations that have been conducted there since 1998. The earliest identified archaeological sites, ca. 1200- ca. 1500, provide for a layer of Native American history predating the ca. 1652 arrival of the Sylvester family and the Contact Period; the remaining archaeology corresponds with the family’s tenure, along with that of subsequent owners, and represents the transition from provisioning plantation to tenant farm activities and, ultimately, to a fully developed manor with corresponding high-style dwelling. These archaeological excavations, in concert with the existing and extensive documentary record, have provided tremendous insights into the early history of the property and in particular the first few decades of occupation by the Sylvesters, during which time provisioning activities were being undertaken.

The following table represents the various chronological periods at Sylvester Manor as defined by archaeologists Stephen Mrozowski, Katherine Hayes and Anne P. Hancock, and the historic resources with which they are associated:

²¹“Shelter Island Season is at its Height Now,” *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 11 August 1907.

²²“Sylvester Manor House,” *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, 25 August 1900.

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Period	Date Range	Primary Site Components
Late Woodland Period	ca. 1200- ca. 1500	Native American site
Contact Period	ca. 1500- 1652	Native American site
Early Plantation Period	1652-1680	Archaeological deposits
Tenant Farm Period	1692-1708	Archaeological deposits
Formal Manor Period	1735-present	Manor house and related features ²³

The two oldest identified archaeological sites, located north of the core of the manor house on the peninsula, portray the presence of Native Americans on Shelter Island both immediately prior to and during the Contact Period. Katherine Priddy, in her overview of the ethno-history of Sylvester Manor, offered insights into this period, during which time local indigenous groups established trade and communication with European Americans.²⁴ *Manhansack-Abaquatuwamock*, the Algonquian name for Shelter Island, was populated by the Manhansets—Menhansacks, Manhansetts or Menhansicks variously—prior to the arrival of European Americans. The Manhansets, along with the Shinnecock, Montaukett and Corchaug Indians of eastern Long Island, became subjects of the Pequots of Connecticut in the early years of the seventeenth century. The Manhansets and other eastern Long Island tribes were, at that time, geographically situated between the Dutch cultural hearth of New Amsterdam and the English settlements of southern New England, in addition to the domains of the Pequots, Narragansetts and Niantics of Connecticut and Rhode Island. Following the decimation of the Pequots at the hands of the English in 1637, which greatly diminished that tribe’s regional influence, the confederacy of Eastern Long Island tribes led by the Manhanset sachem Youghco terminated their tributary status to the Pequot and sought to establish direct trade and communication with the English of Connecticut and the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The English proved willing partners, as they viewed this interaction as an opportunity to strengthen their claim to Long Island in advance of the Dutch and to capitalize on the wampum trade, a valuable seventeenth-century commodity which was in large measure sourced from the coastal region of Peconic Bay and which included Shelter Island.²⁵

English efforts to colonize Long Island were initiated in 1635, at which time Charles I granted William Alexander, the Earl of Stirling, a land patent for the establishment of a colony there; acquisitions within the patent additionally required purchase from the local Native American groups. James Farrett, Stirling’s land agent, claimed title to Shelter Island as part of a 10,000 acre grant, but it is unknown whether he took up residence there. In 1639 Lion Gardiner purchased from the Manhanset the island which came to bear that family’s name and the following year English settlements were established on the North and South forks at Southold and Southampton, respectively, thereby initiating English settlement. The various settlers who established these early English footholds acquired land through official Crown patents from Farrett and by purchase from native tribes. Following Stirling’s death in 1640, Farrett’s funding was terminated and in 1641 he sold his rights to Shelter Island to Stephen Goodyear, a New Haven merchant who later served as Deputy General of the New Haven Colony. This period was characterized by shifting allegiances and efforts by both the English and Dutch to cultivate and exploit their relations with the Manhanset and other eastern Long Island tribes for political advantage. As noted by Priddy and others, the tribes used this

²³Table 1, Chronological periods at Sylvester Manor in Stephen A. Mrozowski, Katherine H. Hayes and Anne P. Hancock, “The Archaeology of Sylvester Manor,” *Northeast Historical Archaeology*, vol. 36 [2007], issue 1, article 3, 11. It was noted that, with the exception of the Late Woodland and Contact periods, the names provided were specific to Sylvester Manor.

²⁴Katherine Lee Priddy, “From Youghco to Black John: Ethnohistory of Sylvester Manor, ca. 1600-1735,” in *Northeast Historical Archaeology*, vol. 36 [2007], issue 1, article 4. See also Faren Siminoff, *Crossing the Sound* (New York: NYU Press, 2004) and Marion Ales, “A History of the Indians on Montauk, Long Island,” 1979.

²⁵Ibid, 2-3.

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dynamic and the tensions between these two European powers to try and advance their own agenda, much as the English and Dutch were.²⁶

The acquisition of Shelter Island from Goodyear by the Sylvester brothers and their partners, Middleton and Rouse, initiated a roughly 40-year period in which the property functioned principally to supply two Barbados plantations owned jointly by Nathaniel and Constant Sylvester. It also initiated a period characterized by the close interaction of European Americans, African Americans, and Native Americans in this shared endeavor, though under a diverse set of circumstances and one marked by notably different cultural perspectives. In 1652 articles of agreement were drawn up by the four partners, which indicated all would hold an equal share in the new plantation. A suitable dwelling was to be erected thereon, a “house with six or seven convenient rooms,” which would function as the overseer’s domicile and as the base of operations for the plantation.²⁷ While the remains of this original dwelling have not been definitively located, excavations have revealed one portion of a very early post-in-ground or “earth fast” structure adjacent to an open working yard, a portion of a patterned cobble paving, and an extensive midden containing destruction debris from the plantation-era structures. The working yard itself yielded ceramics of a regional Native style—Shantok—expedient stone tools of flint, scales and bones of large deep-water fish, and debris from the production of wampum, among other things. In combination, these materials strongly suggest the presence and activity of Manhasset people at the plantation.²⁸

The principal focus of the provisioning operation was to provide those necessities upon which the Barbados plantations relied, and which could not be sourced in the West Indies, namely oak from which barrel staves could be fashioned and various other foodstuffs and provisions. Records indicate that wood was harvested locally for staves and additionally sought from distant locales in Connecticut. Nathaniel Sylvester’s will and estate inventory of ca. 1680 provides a glimpse into the plantation operation as configured at that time and the infrastructure developed to conduct provisioning activities. The property at that date included the house, a warehouse, a barn, a salt house, and a cider mill and press, in addition to land dedicated to garden and orchard. Of the livestock maintained there were 400 head of sheep, 40 horses, over 200 head of cattle, and 120 pigs. Noted, too, were a total of 23 African American slaves, who were named in family units and whose precise role in the plantation operation is not fully understood. Additional archaeological features and materials suggest the nature of their roles as laborers, however. For example, an extensive and layered waste pit located adjacent to the structural features contained enormous volumes of livestock butchery waste, reflecting the provisioning of the Barbados plantations as well as the diet of the residents of the manor. This pit also contained mortar production waste and structural demolition materials, indicating the building and tearing down of structures throughout the plantation period, and smaller quantities of domestic trash, worked stone, locally produced ceramics of Native styles, and wampum production waste.²⁹

The names of many of the individuals that comprised the Sylvester family slave holdings at the time of Nathaniel Sylvester’s death were listed in his will. These were Tammero and Oyou, a married couple who had four children; Black John and daughter Priscilla; J:O and Maria, a married couple; Jenkin; Tony and Nannie, a married couple with four daughters, Hester, Grace, Semenie and Aby; Japhet and Semenie, a married couple; and Jacquero and Hannah, a married couple with two daughters, Hope and Isabel.³⁰ This is thought to be one of the largest slave-holdings in the Northeast at that time.

²⁶Ibid, 3-4.

²⁷Mrowsowski et al, “Archaeology of Sylvester Manor,” 9.

²⁸Information courtesy of Katherine Hayes, August 2014.

²⁹Ibid

³⁰Ibid

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Following Nathaniel Sylvester's death in 1680 his wife, Grizzell, and son, Giles, continued the activities of the plantation, though by all indications on increasingly diminished terms; Giles assumed full control of the operation following his mother's death. An account book of Giles Sylvester, 1680-1701, indicates that during this period, at which time the transition away from provisioning activities was underway, work was to some extent achieved by day laborers, some apparently of Native American lineage, who harvested wood and collected produce in exchange for cider and alcohol.³¹ This period is materially difficult to distinguish from the plantation with the exception of small numbers of ceramics and tobacco pipes dating to the turn of the eighteenth century.

Research Questions

The questions driving archaeological research to date have been concerned with the nature of the pluralistic community forged in the labor of the provisioning plantation period, particularly the experience of African and Native American peoples who were marginalized or otherwise excluded from the archival record. Sylvester Manor has offered an unparalleled opportunity to pursue these questions given the scarcity of intact sites of slavery in the Northern colonies, and the tendencies of later historians to downplay, if not ignore, the practice of slavery there. In addition, the investigation of material culture and landscapes from the plantation has focused on the ways in which cultural, technological, and ideological exchanges and changes occur in the context of the diverse labor force at the plantation, as well as the relationship between the controlling Sylvesters and their laborers. The role of Native peoples in such early colonial contexts, including plantations, has been another major research focus. Most broadly, questions about how local colonization articulates both with the Northeast region and with the commercial Atlantic world have been explored by interpreting the circulation of ideas (about labor, commerce, architecture and landscape) and materials at the plantation. Although a significant amount of archaeological work has been done on the early plantation context of the Manor, major specific questions remain:³²

- What can the working waterfront area (the West Lawn) further tell us about the Sylvester's engagement in the trans-Atlantic trade? Is the infrastructure built upon a European model like Amsterdam? This area has been tested but not significantly excavated. Further, more sourcing studies may help to establish the areas of origin for particular types of materials (ceramics, building materials, coral and flint) may illustrate the specific goods in circulation, especially if compared to materials from the connected Barbados plantations.
- While the core plantation area has been intensively examined, what did the broader landscape look like? As an agricultural operation, we anticipate evidence of fields, orchards, and pastures, and that these may have been the areas of greatest interaction between the Manhasset and the enslaved Africans. An extensive landscape survey, especially drawing upon available multispectral data, is needed to address this question more completely.
- What was the connection of Sylvester Manor to the development of slave-owning estates in the Northeast colonies? Archival research, for example tracing the descendants of the enslaved, and comparative material culture studies could demonstrate the network of family and business connections that were the foundation for early colonial capital. In other words, can we determine the extent to which slavery underwrote the wealth of the northeast colonies?

³¹Mrowsowski et al, "Archaeology of Sylvester Manor," 10.

³²This synopsis and associated research questions generated by the archaeological investigations at Sylvester Manor was provided by Katherine Hayes, August 2014.

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- What was the experience of the Manhasset in the centuries after the Sylvester settlement? Like many Native tribes, the disappearance of the Manhasset from documentary records is assumed to have reflected their actual disappearance, yet the ongoing presence of Native peoples through the eighteenth century and later has been inadequately investigated. This question has ongoing significance for contemporary tribes seeking to demonstrate historical continuity.
- What was the impact of the plantation on the local environment? In a time of human-induced climate change, it is of tremendous significance to examine colonial enterprises among other historical periods to compare the changes introduced by timber exploitation, animal husbandry, and agriculture. Some preliminary work with cores to assess pollen, phytolith, and other environmental markers has been done (see Trigg and Leasure 2007) but should be more intensively explored.

Conclusion: The Case for National Significance

The construction of the main house for Brinley Sylvester ca. 1737 signified a new epoch in Sylvester Manor's history, in part a consequence of shifting political-economic variables which demanded changes in land use and ended the provisioning plantation era. The Sylvester Manor house, while a seminal example of Georgian-era design on eastern Long Island which relates directly, as demonstrated by Robert Hefner, to Rhode Island examples, is nevertheless a building of regional, but not national, significance. The case for the national significance of Sylvester Manor instead rests on the extensive archaeology undertaken on the property since the late 1990s, work that has provided tremendous insights into the cultural interaction of Native Americans, European Americans and African Americans on this land prior to the turn of the eighteenth century, during what has been termed the Early Plantation Period of the property's history. This information has provided a rare and largely unparalleled view of a Northern slave plantation in the seventeenth century and indicates that Native Americans likely assumed a significant role in the early provisioning operation. As noted by Katherine Hayes their role as a labor force makes sense as many of the provisioning activities, such as slaughtering, food preparation and packing, and harvesting were of a seasonal and fluctuating nature.

Hayes, whose ongoing work has been central in developing a framework in which to understand the archaeology of Sylvester Manor, contextualized the site in the following terms:

In this period, many critical themes of American society were forged. Some, like racial categorization and Indian disenfranchisement, are painful and difficult but still part of contemporary social struggles. Others, like the emergence of global capitalism, are more valorized in the present, though still subject to conflict. Above all a diverse society emerged from the very beginnings of American colonization. Sylvester Manor's early plantation, seen through the archaeology, exhibits a rare degree of preservation and is thus of great significance to national history as well as contemporary social discourse.³³

The archaeological investigations at Sylvester Manor have yielded material culture that portrays the occupation of the site by Shelter Island's indigenous population prior to European American contact but which also illuminates how everyday objects were reshaped by the convergence of Native American, European American and possibly African American interaction. This aspect of the site's importance was articulated by Jack Gary, who provided the following synopsis:

The material culture recovered from Sylvester Manor's 17th-century deposits not only informs our

³³Katherine Hayes, August 2014.

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understanding of the plantation's depositional history but also is characteristic of cultural interactions between Europeans, Native Americans, and possibly Africans. The mixture of cultural material in these deposits suggests intense and sustained cultural interactions that have led to the production and use of certain materials outside of their cultural norms. Several of these items are European goods altered for use in Native or possibly African cultural systems, while other items reflect the creolization of material culture by blending morphological and stylistic attributes of two material cultures. These objects point to a very visible Native American presence in the 17th century.³⁴

Among those artifacts which speak most forcefully to this process of hybridization is a globular container identified as Shantok Castellated, a highly decorative ceramic style produced by Native Americans in the seventeenth century in southern New England. While it relates strongly, in aesthetic terms, to this tradition, it nevertheless is one of two vessels recovered from the site that included a handle, a distinctly European feature. While the functionality of the handle, as noted by Gary, is debatable, "the blending of Native American and European attributes is unquestionable."³⁵ Additional analysis of the ceramics also suggests the incorporation of African technological skills with otherwise apparently Native designs, yet more evidence of this process of cultural cross-fertilization.³⁶

Other materials, both trade items and European cultural material appropriated by Native Americans and employed for uses within their own cultural framework, speak to this cross-cultural experience. Among the more compelling artifacts of this group is a Spanish silver cob which appears to date to the reign of Phillip IV, 1621-1665; hand-etched designs were rendered on both sides, one of which is a Native American thunderbird design, a motif also etched into a smooth cobble found on the site, suggesting the continuation of Native American symbolic practices in the early Colonial era. Also representative of the alteration of European objects for other uses is a thimble which was pierced in order to be used as a tinkling cone, a pierced Charles II silver penny presumably incorporated into a decorative item, and a copper ferrule with etched designs.³⁷

The influence of African-based traditions remains somewhat elusive in this context, as their contribution to the archaeological record is, to date, largely absent. However, there is no disputing the presence of African American slaves on the early Sylvester plantation, given the documentary record, though their precise role in seventeenth-century provisioning activities, specifically, remains a matter of speculation. To date no descendant African American population related to Sylvester Manor has been identified.

The following, borrowed from Jack Gary, offers a fitting summation of the archaeology of Sylvester Manor:

In the end the archaeology at Sylvester Manor reveals a complex web of interaction that involved three very different groups of individuals with different sets of cultural expectations and different histories. At the center of it all was the space constructed for a series of commercial enterprises that provided the context and arena for daily interaction. The densely layered remains we have unearthed have not disappointed in delivering a wealth of information from which to construct images of Sylvester Manor's changing landscape. And while those images remain outlines awaiting further definition and completion, they nevertheless spark the imagination concerning what life was like for those who found themselves, willingly or unwillingly, participants in one of the many colonial

1. ³⁴Jack Gary, "Material Culture and Multi-Cultural Interactions at Sylvester Manor," *Northeast Historical Archaeology*, vol. 36 [2007],

³⁵Ibid, 6.

³⁶Information courtesy of Katherine Hayes, August 2014.

³⁷Gary, "Material Culture," 7-9.

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struggles that were the seeds of today's troubled world.³⁸

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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Griswold, Mac. *The Manor*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2013.

Hefner, Robert. "Sylvester Manor: Brinley Sylvester's c. 1737 House." Historic Structure Report: Architecture Component prepared for Sylvester Manor Education Farm, Inc., March 2013.

Mrozowski, Stephen A. and Katherine H. Hayes and Anne P. Hancock. "The Archaeology of Sylvester Manor." *Northeast Historical Archaeology*, vol. 36 [2007], issue 1, article 3, 11.

Priddy, Katherine Lee. "From Youghco to Black John: Ethnohistory of Sylvester Manor, ca. 1600-1735." *Northeast Historical Archaeology*, vol. 36 [2007], issue 1, article 4.

Siminoff, Faren. *Crossing the Sound*. New York: NYU Press, 2004.

Thompson, Benjamin F. *History of Long Island*. New York: E. French, 1839.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

³⁸Ibid, 11.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 226.58 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>723862</u> Easting	<u>4551708</u> Northing	7	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>722998</u> Easting	<u>4550742</u> Northing
2	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>724041</u> Easting	<u>4551016</u> Northing	8	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>723142</u> Easting	<u>4551400</u> Northing
3	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>724112</u> Easting	<u>4550571</u> Northing	9	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>723282</u> Easting	<u>4551594</u> Northing
4	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>723127</u> Easting	<u>4550505</u> Northing		<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
5	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>723065</u> Easting	<u>4550519</u> Northing		<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
6	<u>18</u> Zone	<u>722970</u> Easting	<u>4550606</u> Northing		<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is depicted on the three enclosed maps, all of which are entitled "Sylvester Manor, Shelter Island, Suffolk Co., NY." The maps were rendered at a scale of 1: 24,000, 1: 12,000 and 1: 9,000.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary as drawn includes 226.58 acres of property. It is bounded on the south by Manwaring Road; on the east by Manhasset Road; on the north by the southern property lines of properties largely fronting of Cobbetts Lane; and on the west by a water feature, Gardiners Creek. Of the remaining contiguous land associated with the cited period of significance, only two parcels have been excluded from the boundary, consisting of a total of 13.7 acres. The smaller of these parcels, consisting of 2.0 acres, contains the so-called Creek Cottage, which has been so thoroughly renovated so as to no longer be deemed a contributing resource in the context of this nomination. The other, 11.7 acres, contains no built features. The boundary has been drawn to include all the principal architectural, historic and archaeological features association with Sylvester Manor, in addition to historically associated agricultural and wood land.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title William E. Krattinger
 organization NYS Division for Historic Preservation date August 2014; February 2015
 street & number PO Box 189, Peebles Island State Park telephone (518) 237-8643 ext. 3265
 city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12188
 e-mail William.Krattinger@parks.ny.gov

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

PHOTOGRAPHS by William E. Krattinger, June and August, 2014

TIFF format, original files maintained at NYS DHP, Peebles Island State Park, Waterford NY 12188

- 0001 Gateposts at south entrance from Manwaring Road, view looking north
- 0002 Sylvester Manor House, view looking to northeast showing south and west elevations
- 0003 Commemorative marker denoting African American/Native American burial ground
- 0004 African American/Native American burial ground, view looking roughly west
- 0005 View showing exposed cobble pathway
- 0006 Horsford Cottage, view looking roughly north
- 0007 Garden house/former privy, view looking to northeast
- 0008 Small shed with early timber frame, view looking to northeast
- 0009 Small shed, interior view showing English tying joint construction
- 0010 Long barn, view looking to northwest, Glover barn in background
- 0011 Small barn, view looking to southwest, Glover barn in background
- 0012 Glover barn, view showing east and north elevations
- 0013 Glover barn, interior view showing timber-frame construction
- 0014 Peacock barn, view looking to northeast
- 0015 Story-and-a-half dwelling east of main barn complex, view looking roughly to northwest
- 0016 Garden, general view looking towards interior along path
- 0017 Garden, general view showing stairs and associated railing, north side
- 0018 Agricultural field and windmill, view looking north
- 0019 Gateposts and railing, Quaker burial ground
- 0020 Commemorative marker, Quaker burial ground
- 0021 Eighteenth century grave markers, Quaker burial ground

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Sylvester Manor Educational Farm, c/o Cara Loriz
street & number Post Office Box 2029 telephone _____
city or town Shelter Island state NY zip code 11964

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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HISTORIC IMAGES & PHOTOGRAPHS



ABOVE, perspective view of Manor House, 1870s, and prior to ca. 1908 work;
BELOW, Sylvester Manor, principal elevation, as drawn by Henry Bacon ca. 1908.



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ABOVE, ca. 1880 view (earliest known) showing house with original cornice; BELOW, ca. 1890s view showing kitchen wing and other conditions prior to 1908 reworking.



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ABOVE, undated view towards African-American slave cemetery; BELOW, 1880s dedication ceremony at Quaker Cemetery

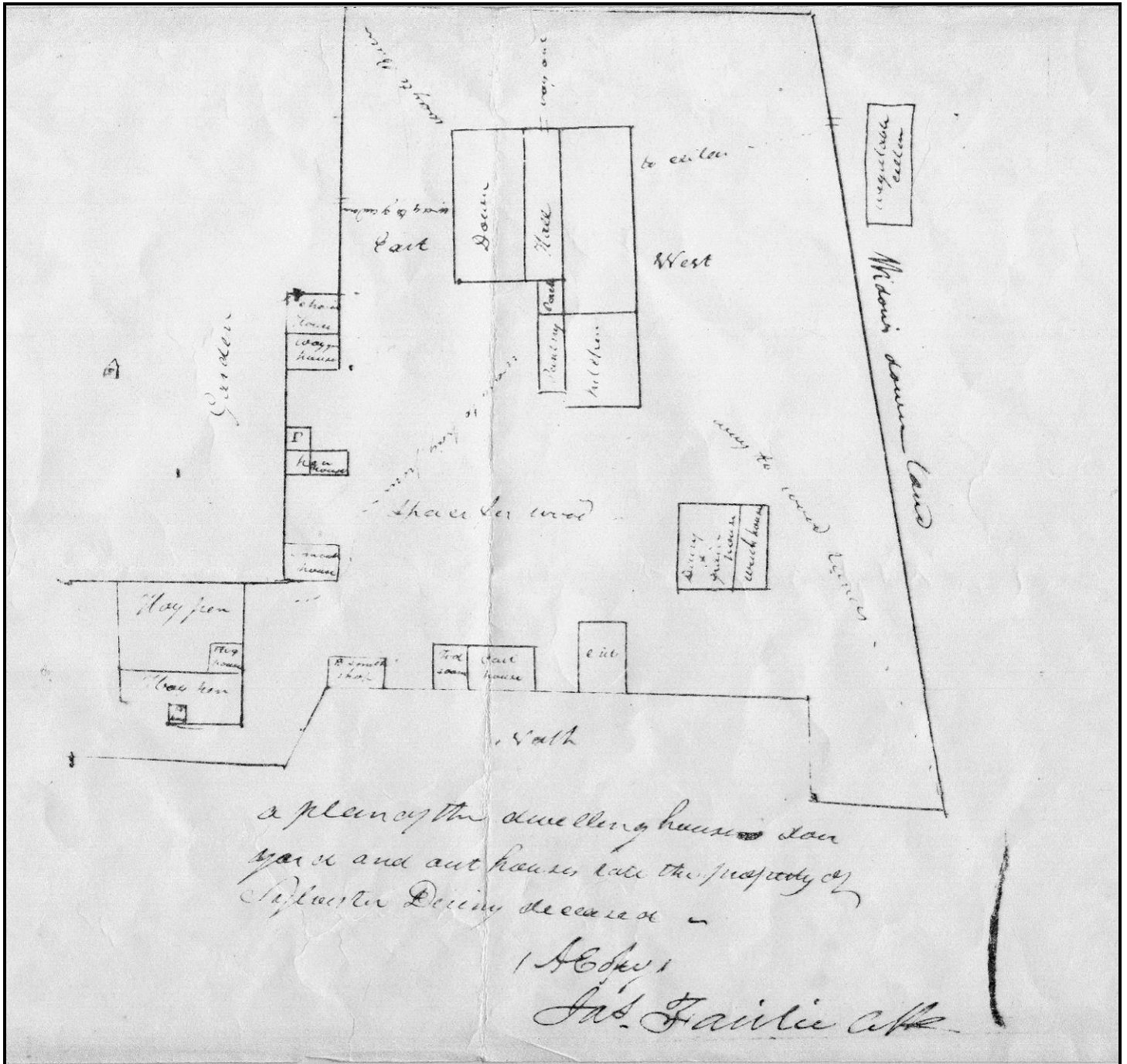


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ABOVE, 1827 dower map depicting the principal house and relationship to the outbuildings

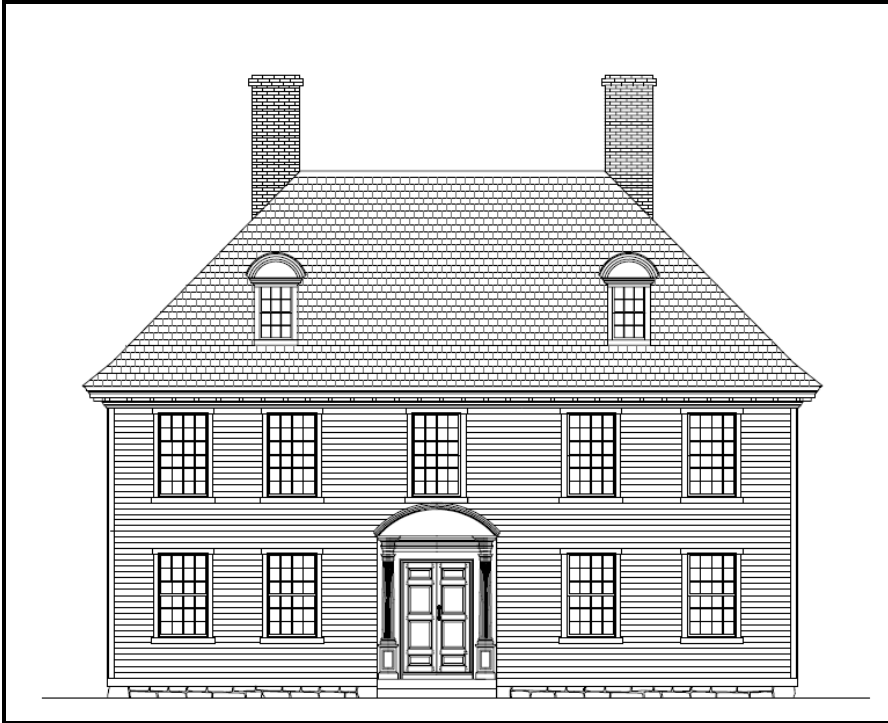
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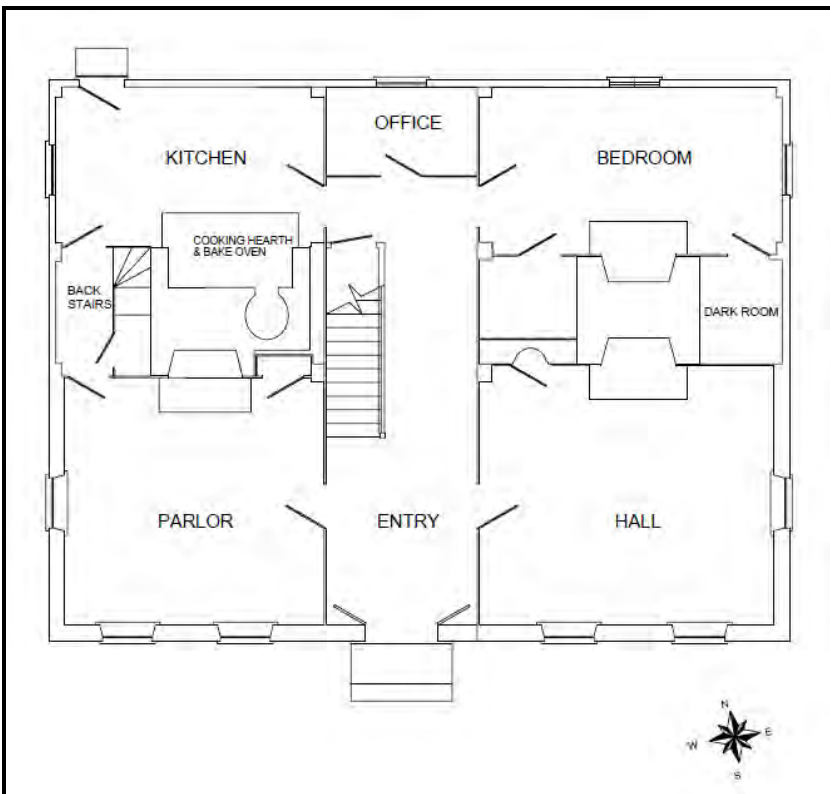
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MANOR HOUSE PLANS & CONJECTURALS



ABOVE, conjectural elevation of original ca. 1737 façade; BELOW, conjectural Phase I plan. Both images from Hefner HSR.

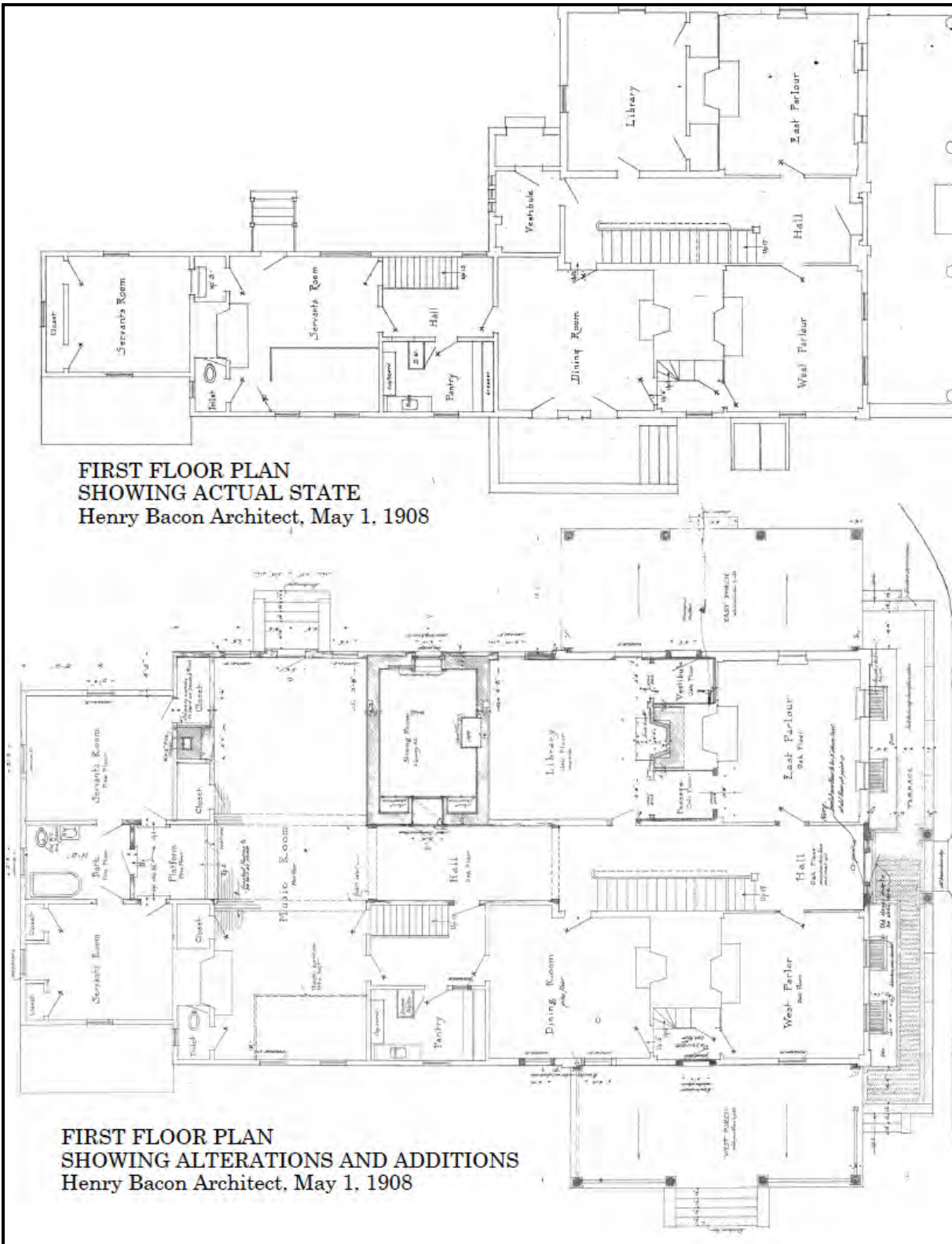


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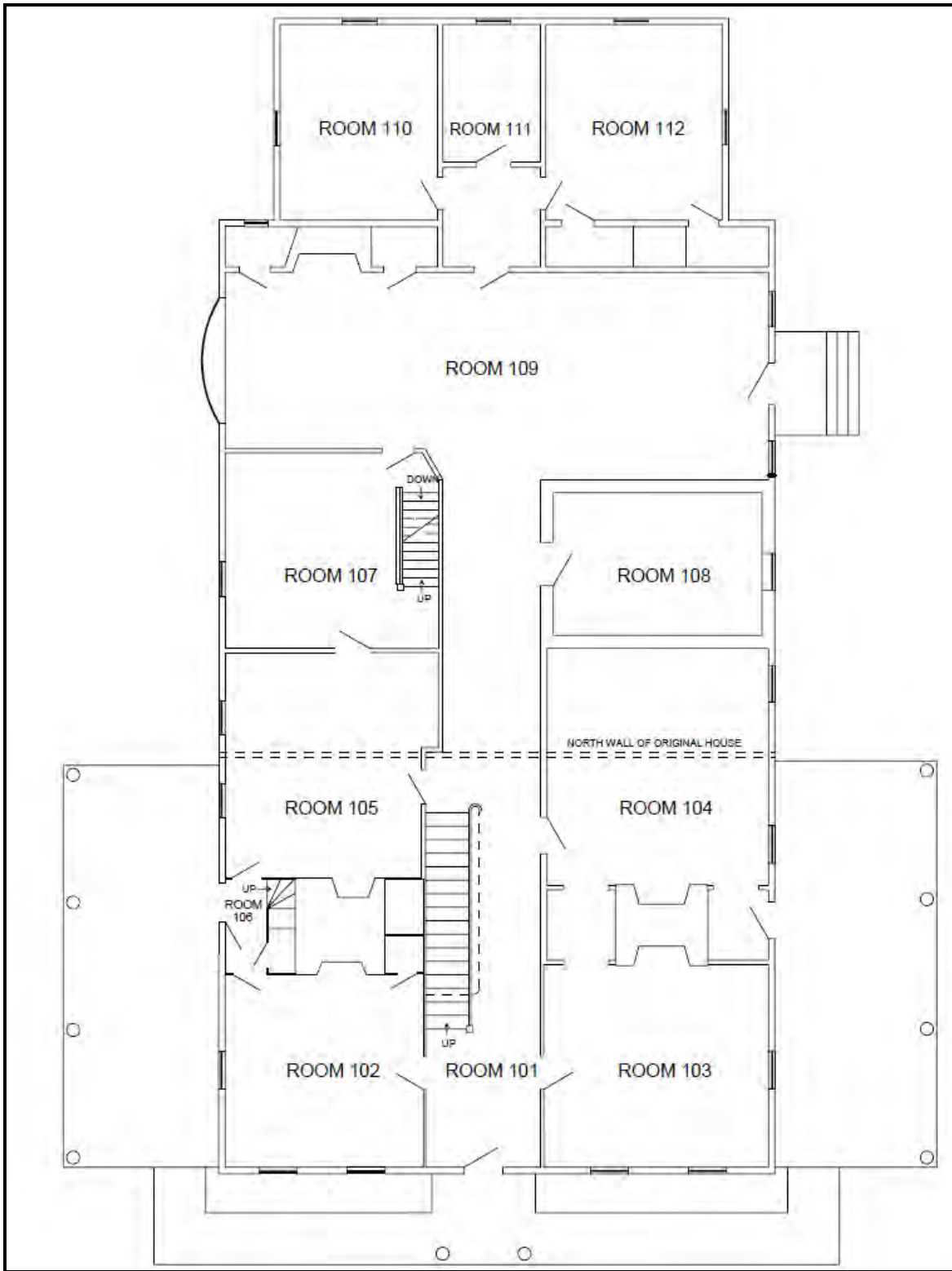
ABOVE, 1908 plans by Henry Bacon

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Existing first-floor plan; note position of original ca. 1737 north wall. Hefner HSR

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL MAPS & IMAGES (courtesy of Katherine Hayes)



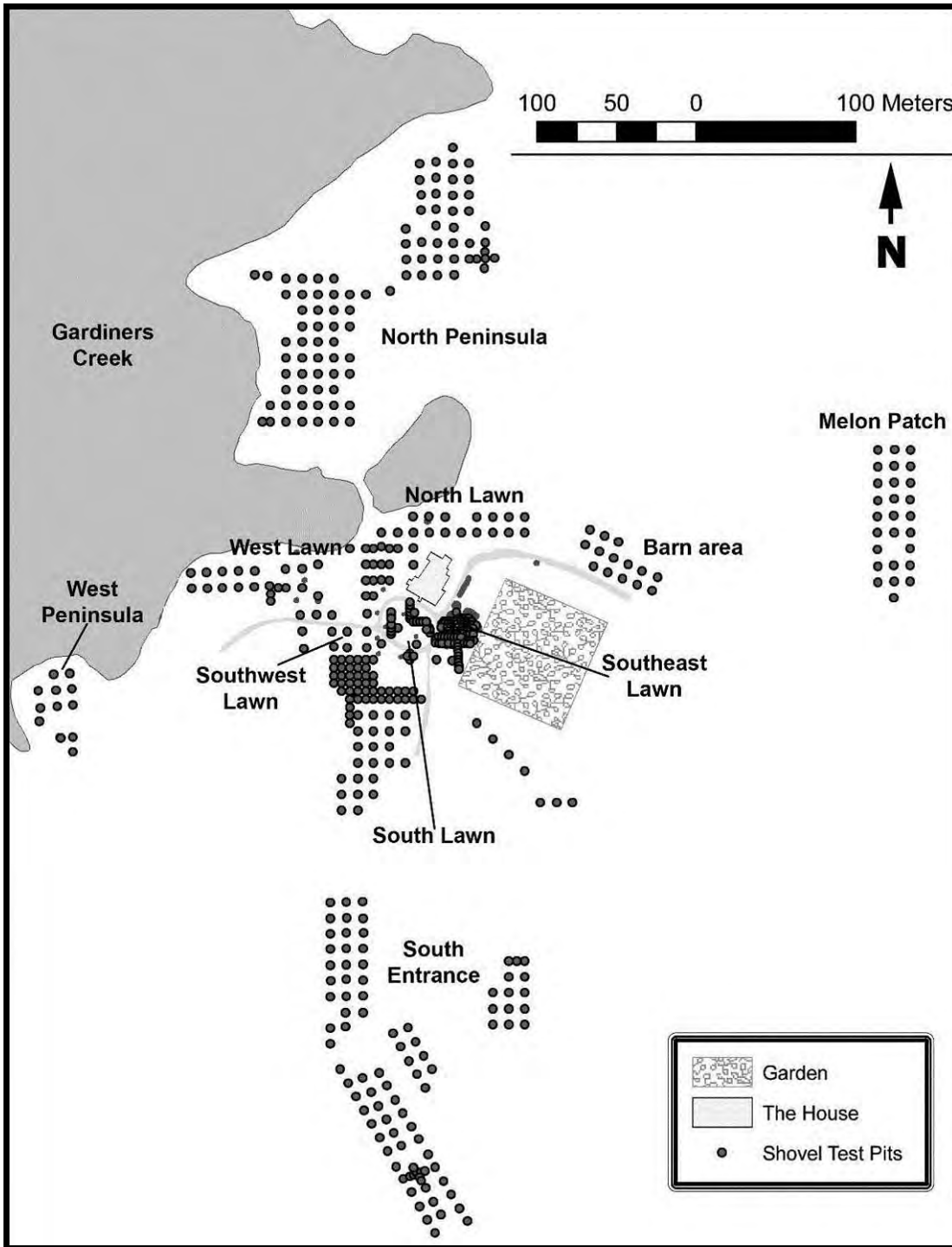
ABOVE, map showing Eastern Algonquian/Coastal tribal territories

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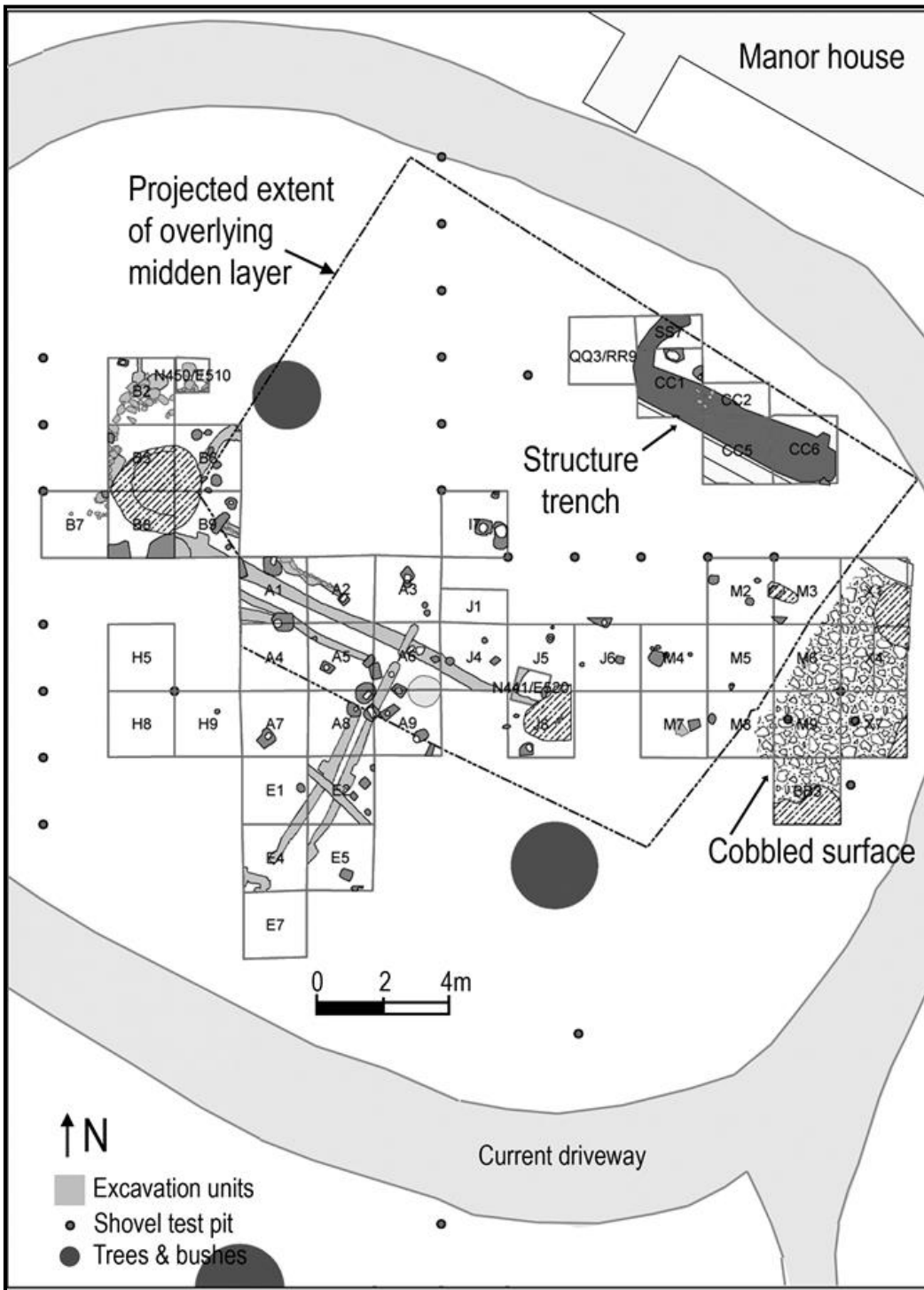
ABOVE, map showing locations of archaeological testing

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ABOVE, map depicting plantation period features and overlying midden layer

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ABOVE, view showing excavated structure trench

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ABOVE, plantation-era cobbled road surface; BELOW, animal bone in waste pit



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ABOVE, *Wampumpeague* or shell beads; BELOW partial vessel with handle from large waste pit feature



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ABOVE, brass ferule with etched bands and cross-hatching; BELOW, pierced Charles II-period silver penny

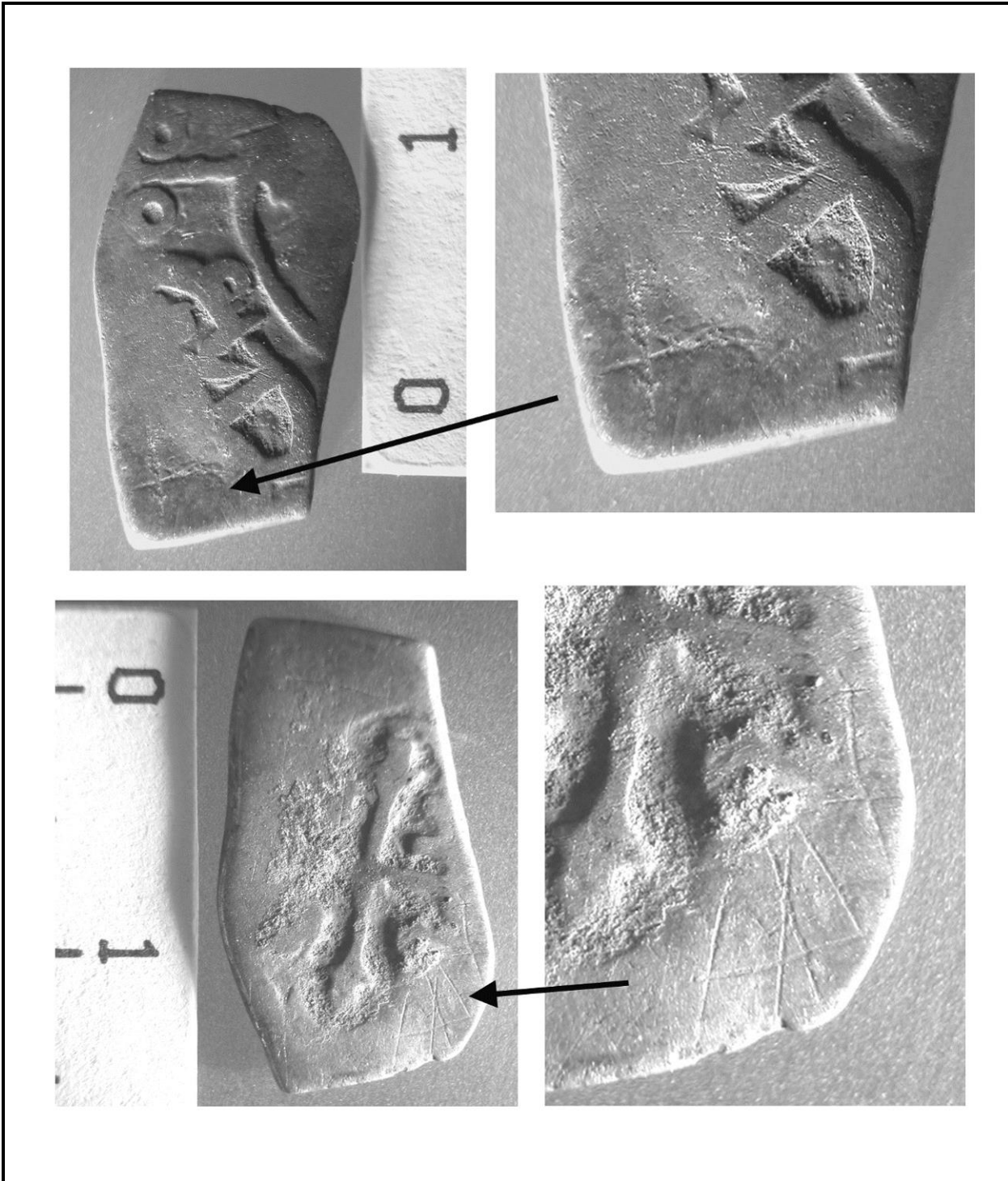


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ABOVE, clipped coin with etched symbols added on both sides

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ABOVE & BELOW, European-manufactured pottery



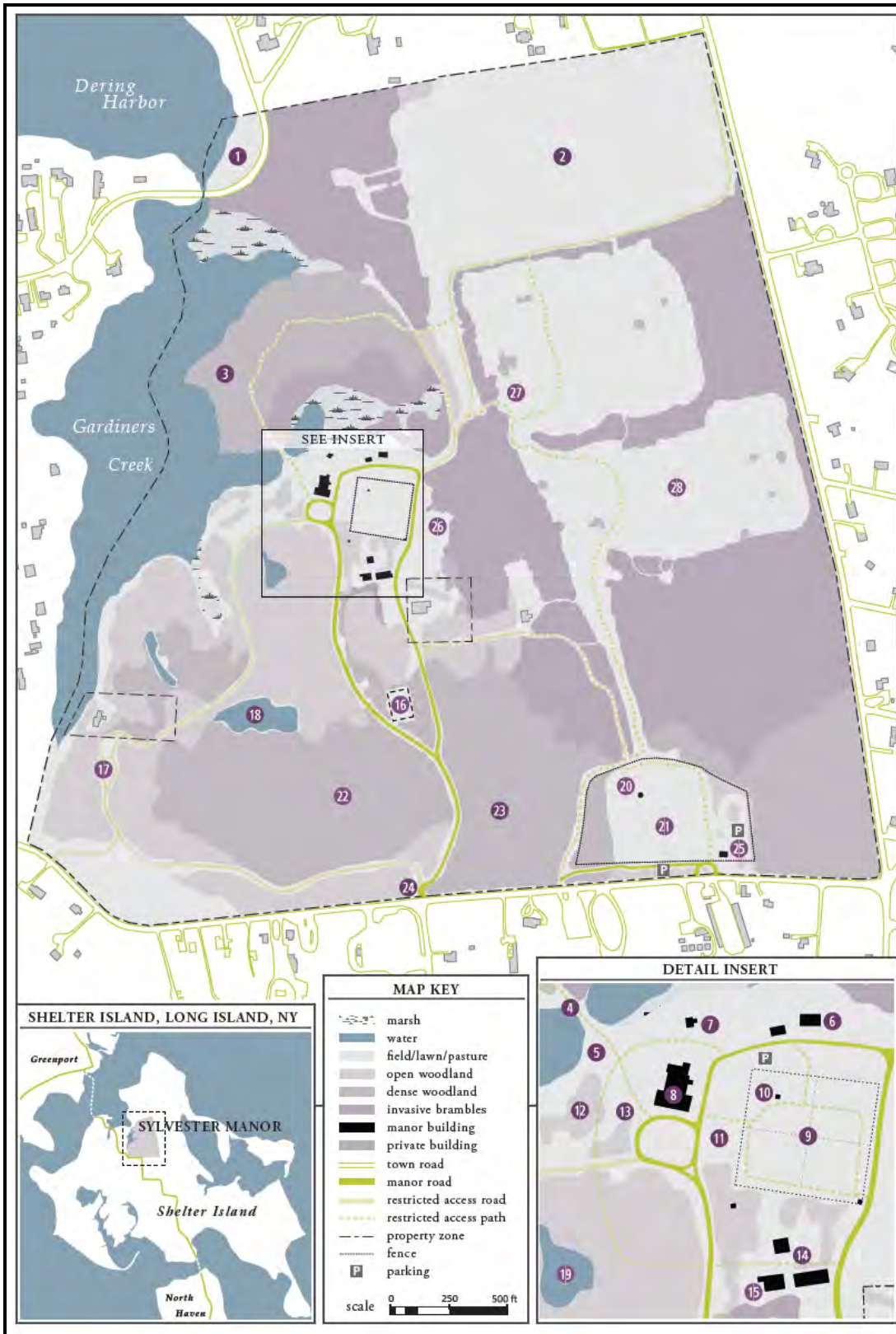
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SITE MAP, courtesy of SMEF (NRHP boundary not depicted)



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- 1 **Dering Harbor Beach** is named for Thomas Dering, Manor Proprietor from 1752 to 1785 who figured in the Revolutionary War. In the 1600s, European ships anchored off the beach, and row boats ferried supplies to and from the Manor's core.
- 2 At 26-acres, the **Big Field** has offered an agricultural vista for centuries and is a remnant of a much larger farm. It was preserved through the sale of development rights in 2012, protecting over 83 acres of productive farmland including this field and the Old Fields to the south, see 14 below.
- 3 Native Manhasset tribespeople maintained a small village on **Manhasset Neck** after Nathaniel Sylvester arrived in 1652 on lands inhabited for millennia. In 2009, Sylvester Manor owner Eben Ostby donated a permanent conservation easement on 22 creekfront acres to Peconic Land Trust.
- 4 The **Land Bridge** was reconstructed around 1909 on the site of a former 17th-century tide-powered sawmill spanning a neck of Gardiners Creek.
- 5 Goods brought over in ships from the Netherlands, England and Barbados were transferred ashore by rowboat at the **Historic Water Landing**. Grain, barrel staves, salt, meat, and livestock were shipped out around the Atlantic, to local ports, the Caribbean, and Europe.
- 6 The **Engine Barn** is home to tractors, chainsaws, mowers, leaf-blowers and the like.
- 7 The **Fumace House**, believed to be an 18th century building, was once home to Eben Norton Horsford's summer chemistry studio.
- 8 The 1737 **Manor House** was built by Brinley Sylvester (1694-1752) to serve as his home and the symbolic center of Shelter Island. Designed in the new Early Georgian style of Newport, Rhode Island, the house replaced the original 1652 Manor House, a First Period building with a red tile roof. A Historic Structure Report completed in 2013 confirms that beams from the original Manor House were repurposed in the 1737 attic.
- 9 The **Historic Garden**, linked to Brinley Sylvester's time, features a long axial path off the SE corner of the house. The garden was divided into sections for fruit trees, vegetables, flowers and shrubs. The original beds were redeveloped as tastes and needs changed, most notably by Cornelia Horsford and Alice Fiske. Volunteer efforts to revive the garden are underway.
- 10 The **18th Century Privy** in the garden is a four-seater outhouse with one tot-sized training seat. Gardeners may have used "humanure" from the privy for compost.
- 11 Tradition has it that Nathaniel and Grizzell Sylvester brought the first boxwoods to America. The **Boxwoods** on the lawn may be scions of the original specimens, and can be traced back at least to the late 18th century.
- 12 The enormous **Copper Beech** on the back lawn was a gift to the Manor from Asa Gray in the mid-1800s. Gray, called "the father of American botany," wrote the first standard textbook on the subject and introduced Darwin's theory of evolution to this nation. *Please do not climb on this very old and fragile tree.*
- 13 The 17th-century English maritime **Cannon** was unearthed by landscapers in the 1950s. It was buried, according to legend, to hide the manor's British ties from Dutch soldiers who circled the house in 1674 during the 3rd Anglo-Dutch War.
- 14 The **Long Barn** and **Small Barn** contain the Manor's woodshop, field office, tool storage supply depot and storage space. This area has been the center of our working farm for over 100 years.
- 15 Originally used as a milking parlor for heritage cattle, the **Benjamin Glover Barn** shelters our collection of old farm tools, vehicles, and furniture.
- 16 The "**Burying Ground of the Colored People of Sylvester Manor since 1651**", so commemorated in 1884 by the Horsford family, reportedly contains the remains of as many as 200 Native Americans and enslaved Africans and their descendants. Sacred ground, the plot is fenced but no gravestones exist, and the identities of those buried here are not known. In 2013, archaeologists conducting ground penetrating radar surveys confirmed multiple burials at the site.
- 17 The **Quaker Cemetery Monument** commemorates the role Nathaniel Sylvester, one of the earliest Quaker converts, played in sheltering early Friends from the Puritan persecutions in the 1650s. Present-day Friends now hold Meetings here weekly in spring, summer and fall. The adjacent Creek Cottage is a private residence, built in the 1740s to house the Island's first minister.
- 18 **Pepperidge Pond** is named for the tall Nyssa Sylvatica trees growing on its south bank.
- 19 **Daffodil Pond** is spring-fed and was probably used to water Nathaniel Sylvester's livestock. Each spring, the south-facing bank sprouts in thousands of daffodils.
- 20 The **1810 Dominy Windmill** was used to grind wheat into flour for over 100 years. Built on the North Fork of Long Island, it was brought by barge and ox-team to the center of Shelter Island in the mid 1800's. It was last used to grind flour during food shortages in World Wars I and II.
- 21 The **Windmill Field** is home to our market garden. Over 80 vegetable varieties are grown here, and are sold at our farmstand, to restaurants, and to our Community Supported Agriculture subscribers, who help fund the farm early in the season and share the bounty that unfolds.
- 22 The **Pine Forest** was planted around 1900, at a time when it was believed that pines scrubbed the air and were therefore a remedy for tuberculosis.
- 23 The **Oak Forest**, a mixed hardwood forest of mostly second-growth trees, is the largest woodland at the Manor and runs from the Quaker Cemetery all the way to the Windmill Field. Stands of white and red oaks attracted Nathaniel Sylvester to Shelter Island for their utility in crafting the barrels so indispensable to his partners in the West Indies, used to ship sugar, rum, and molasses.
- 24 The 1915 **Manor Gates** greet visitors from the center of town. Designed in Colonial Revival style by landscape engineer James Greenleaf, they provide a grand approach to the winding drive that ends at the front door of the Manor House.
- 25 The **Farmstand** was built in 2011 using lightning-struck pines milled on the property. Its mortise and tenon timber frame echoes technologies employed in the Windmill and Manor House. In 2013, the Farmstand was enclosed and expanded in response to growing needs, using trees felled by Superstorm Sandy.
- 26 Our **Greenhouse** is a simple way to mitigate our climate in winter and spring. We start our seedlings here — over 100,000 per year.
- 27 The **Watermelon Patch** is, we believe, one of the oldest continuously cultivated fields at the Manor.
- 28 Work continues in our **Oldfields** area in an effort to revive historic farmland, saving it from the choke of invasive vines. In early 2013, 44 acres of historic farmland were cleared and are being returned to active agriculture, offering exciting new possibilities for pasture restoration, cultivation and archaeological study.

Greenport, NY
Quadrangle



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4549000

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722000 723000 724000 725000

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



 Sylvester Manor

Tax Parcel Data:
Suffolk Co, RPS
gis.co.suffolk.ny.us



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Greenport, NY
Quadrangle



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

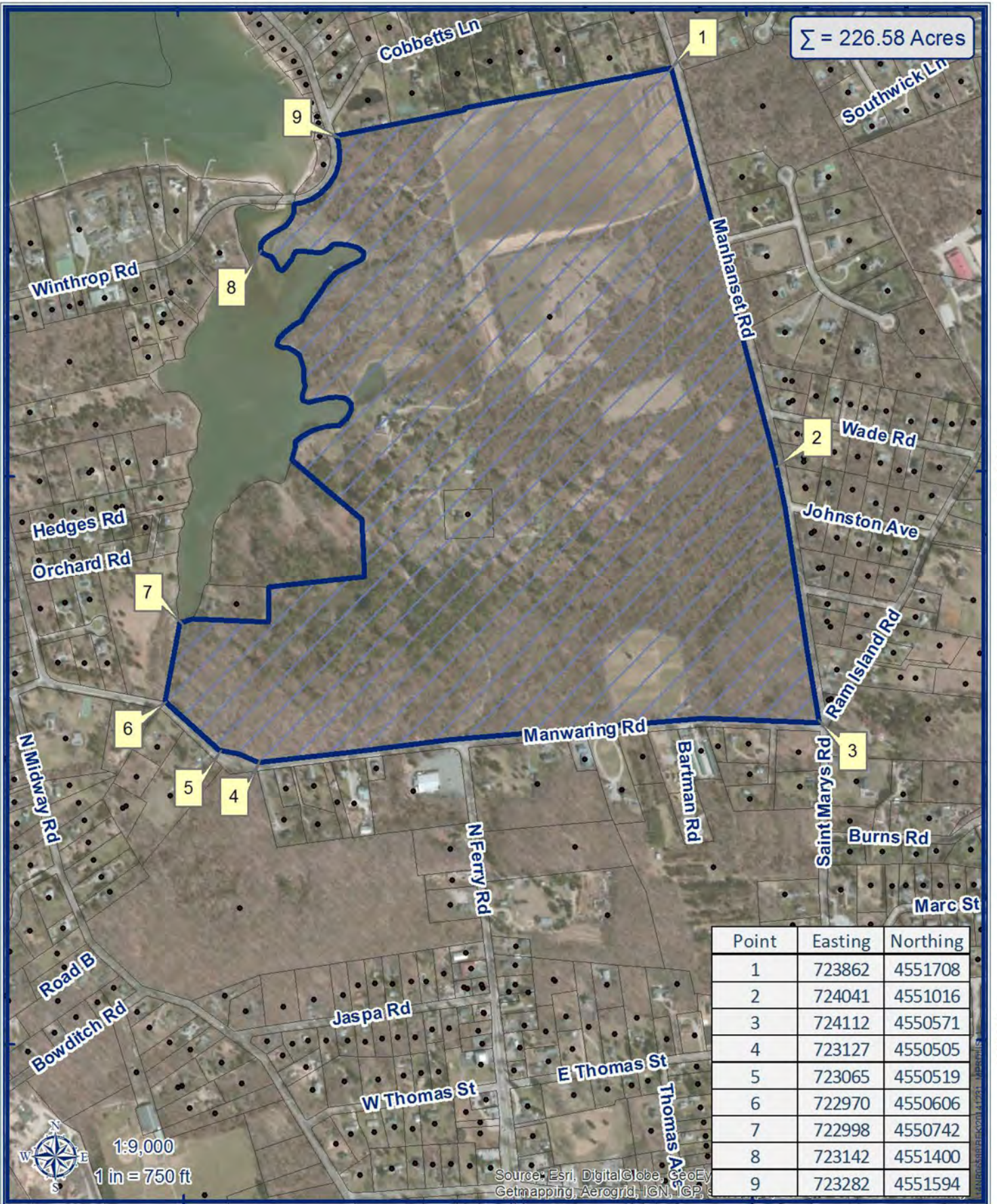


 Sylvester Manor

Tax Parcel Data:
Suffolk Co, RPS
gis.co.suffolk.ny.us



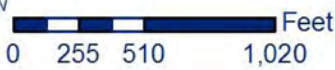
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Σ = 226.58 Acres

Point	Easting	Northing
1	723862	4551708
2	724041	4551016
3	724112	4550571
4	723127	4550505
5	723065	4550519
6	722970	4550606
7	722998	4550742
8	723142	4551400
9	723282	4551594

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter





80

80

SYLVESTER MANOR

1000 SYLVESTER MANOR ROAD
SHELTON, CT 06484

SYLVESTER MANOR
FARMSTAND → 4 MI







Archaeology
at Sylvester Manor



E **T**































POSTED

POSTED
ALL PROPERTY IS
THE PROPERTY OF
THE STATE OF
NEW YORK
AND IS NOT TO BE
USED FOR ANY OTHER
PURPOSE



Here Lyes Buried
y Body of M^r
JONATHAN HUTSON
Who Dec^d April 5
Anno Domⁱ 1729
Aged 71 Years

Samuel Hutchins
Son of M^r Samuel
and M^r Gubne
Hutchins Died
1772 Aged
7 Years

Samuel Hutchins
Son of M^r Samuel
and M^r Gubne
Hutchins Died
1772 Aged
7 Years

Samuel Hutchins
Son of M^r Samuel
and M^r Gubne
Hutchins Died
1772 Aged
7 Years

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Sylvester Manor

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: NEW YORK, Suffolk

DATE RECEIVED: 3/13/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/08/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/23/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/28/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000178

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 4/28/15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*good nomination National significance
for national register. not enough information
for recommending NHC status*

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER Aberrantly DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

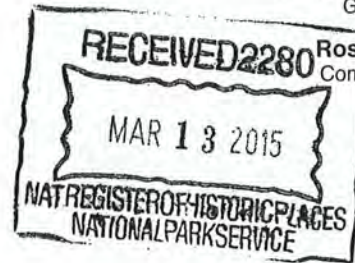


New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Division for Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189
518-237-8643

Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Rose Harvey
Commissioner



6 March 2015

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: National Register Nominations

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following two nominations, both on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

Sylvester Manor, Suffolk County
Corona Play Center, Bronx County

I am aware that there has been a challenge to the ownership of Sylvester Manor. However, after examining the deed, the New York State Historic Preservation Office is confident that we have notified the correct owner. Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you have any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office